

1 Chapter 1. Prologue

Park, a financial journalist, was instructed by his editorial director to cover a big player from Gangnam District ("Gangnam"). Park, however, was not sure how to do it. A big player from Gangnam wouldn't even consider meeting a journalist like Park. Moreover, Park was also not sure where to find a big player or how to contact that person.

After exhausting all the help he could get from his personal connections in financial sectors and even the National Tax Service, Park finally found one person—Gun-Ho Goo. Mr. Goo recently acquired Star building in Gangnam. He had also recently moved to a single house on 300 pyung (over 10,000 sqft) of land; he used to live in T apartment in Dogok Town, Gangnam. Park was told that Mr. Goo was a recluse who was reluctant to meet people.

Park thought that Gun-Ho Goo must be an old man because all those big players in Stock Street from the old days were old people, such as the famous old lady, Madam Baeck, and Mudfish from Apgoojung Town. Well, it makes sense because it takes time to build wealth, doesn't it?

Park, however, was surprised this time when he met Mr. Goo, a reclusive big player from Gangnam, also known as the king of cash. Mr. Goo was in his 30s looking ten years younger than Park himself. Maybe he inherited money from his wealthy parents, which was Park's original assumption. However, Park remembered being told that Mr. Goo's parents used to live in a shabby apartment in Juan Town, Incheon City ("Incheon"). His father was unemployed, and his mother was a caregiver in a nursing home.

Mr. Goo was a college dropout in a small town and eventually graduated from a cyber college. To overcome his inherited poverty and to find a stable job, he came to Noryangjin Town ("Noryangjin"). At first, he tried to be a level-9 government employee, but after he failed the civil service exam several times, he started working in a plastic factory located in Hwaseong City ("Hwaseong") and then moved from one factory to another in Pocheon City ("Pocheon"), Gyeonggi Province, and Yangju City ("Yangju") afterward, working in a production line.

Mr. Goo didn't wake up one day finding himself being rich; he was not

reincarnated in a wealthy family nor did he magically become rich. His current success was based on his sheer effort and enormous luck.

Park asked Mr. Goo one last question: "How much cash do you have available right now if you don't mind me asking?" Park expected to hear tens of millions of dollars.

"Let me see... I am not sure about the exact amount, but probably over a billion dollars."

"Huck! A billion dollars!" Park's jaw dropped in amazement.

2 Chapter 2: An Encounter At The Fishing Site 1

It was early autumn with Cosmos flowers in full bloom, shaken by the wind along the asphalt-paved mountain path. An old shabby sedan struggled up the hill, carrying two young men. Its muffler was probably broken because it made an odd sound. The paint on its rear plastic bumper was flaked off.

"Korea is the best place to live. Even the road to the fishing site is all asphalt-paved."

"This fishing site is not a well-known place. It is surprising to see a new Genesis here."

"That's right. Is it EQ900 limousine?"

The two young men parked their shabby Avante behind the Genesis.

"Hey, our car with this peeling paint bumper looks even shabbier sitting next to Genesis. Let's park our car away from here."

One of two young men reversed while complaining, "It must be a rich dude. Why doesn't he just go golfing?"

"He probably doesn't know this is a free fishing site."

After they parked their car, the two young men took fishing rods out of the trunk. They were lure fishing rods, not bait fishing rods; one had to move to catch fish with lure fishing.

"I prefer lure fishing. I don't have to touch earthworms or maggots."

"But you have to move a lot, too busy in catching fish."

"Lure fishing is really an effective way to lose weight."

"Well, since you, Gun-Ho and me, we both lost jobs, we will live with hunger

and malnourishment, and suffer from cold weather. We won't have chance to gain any weight."

"I heard that these days, poor people gain more weight because they don't have enough resources to watch their diet."

"Hmmm, I will gain weight again then."

"Look, Jong-Suk! Our lucky spot is already occupied by two old men."

"Oh shoot, that's the whole point of coming here."

"Let's try the spot across the reservoir."

"I don't like that place, too many underwater branches."

"Let's then try up on the bridge side."

Those two old men fishing in the spot turned their heads to look behind them; they must have heard the talk. One looked about mid-40s, and the other man seemed to be in his 60s. They didn't appear to be friends or father and son.

'They must have plenty of time in life like us since they came here fishing on weekdays, not on weekends.'

"Mister, did you catch a lot of fish?"

The man seemingly in his 60s shook his head side to side with a smile on his face. Probably not a productive day of fishing. The mid-40s man then gave Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park a menacing look.

"Jong-Suk, let's keep walking. We seem to make him uncomfortable."

"For f*ck's sake, they are the ones who took our lucky spot..."

Gun-Ho chuckled and said, "We'd better mark the spot with our names, Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park, showing that it is reserved for our exclusive use."

"Be quiet! What time is it?"

"It's 20 to 5. Almost 5 o'clock."

"The fish will start biting soon. You go that way; I will go this way around the chestnut tree."

"Catch a big enough fish for spicy fish stew!"

Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park were laid off from their jobs in a small factory with less than 20 employees in Pocheon, Gyeonggi Province. The company lost their contract with the vendors, leading them to start laying off employees. 'Well, I was going to quit the job anyway; I haven't been paid in two months now.'

"Once the company gets back on its feet, I will make sure that you receive unpaid wages and severance pay. You know that I am not doing well." The factory owner implored Gun-Ho Goo to understand his situation.

For the past three days, Gun-Ho Goo went through job search websites such as WorkNet and the classified section in newspapers to find a job. He felt suffocated staying in a small room all day; he used to go out and work in daytime. He pulled his car out of the parking lot in the basement of his tiny studio building and drove around. It then crossed his mind that he didn't file a complaint with the Provincial Office of Labor about his unpaid wages. When he went to the Provincial Office of Labor to file it, he ran across Jong-Suk Park, his colleague there. They then decided to come fishing together to this fishing site the next day.

"I see the bite!"

Gun-Ho Goo tried to reel in the fish. The fishing line got tight then became loose.

"F*ck! It went off the bite! It was a bass the size of a forearm! I saw it when it jumped out of water."

"Bro, did you catch it?"

"It went off!"

"Well, at least you are getting bites. I am not getting anything."

"It's almost sunset, dinner time for fish. They will start biting."

While Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park were having fun fooling around and talking loudly, those mid-40s and 60s men started packing their fishing rods.

"Bro! They seem to be leaving soon. Let's move to that spot!"

"Let's wait until they vacate the spot completely."

"They are so slow."

"It appears that they didn't catch a thing; their fishing net is empty."

"Huh? That Genesis limousine belongs to them? What? The mid-40s man is sitting in the driver's seat and the man in his 60s is sitting in the back seat. They are probably a CEO and a chauffeur." He chuckled.

"Let's focus on fishing."

"If he is rich enough to have a personal chauffeur, why Genesis. Why not Bentley."

"Stay focused!"

The sun went down and it became dark. Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park continued fishing. No one else was around, and only the sound of water filled the air. They couldn't catch anything good. Gun-Ho Goo caught one palm-sized small catfish, but he eventually released it.

"Today is not good. The fishing circumstances are not good."

"You sound intelligent, bro."

"Let's just drink up the soju (Korean distilled liquor) we brought in and let's call it a night. It's getting cold out here; I forgot to bring my long sleeve shirts."

Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park laid out a picnic mat on the grass. They took out a roasted chicken and soju they prepared.

"Drink up. To celebrate the fourth day of our unemployment!"

"You can't straighten your pinky finger."

"This? It is a glorious wound. I got this injury at work handling factory machine. Well, it's still attached. You have a lot of burns!"

"I got burned a lot when I handled injection molding machines at work."

"Try to wear long sleeve shirts when you work. Your future wife won't think those burns are pretty."

"You think it didn't occur to me that I needed to cover my arms at work? It was just too hot to wear long sleeve shirts during summer. I couldn't even wear arm covers from Daiso. Your future wife won't like the bent finger."

"Haha. Who would want to marry a factory worker like me! I am not even a typical factory worker. I am a factory worker who was unpaid and laid off."

"So am I. Korean girls are all gold diggers. Who would marry me? I have no money; I am a low rank college dropout, a cyber college graduate, not so good looking, pot-bellied, and old."

"Do you remember Jung-Hoon from logistics team? We used to work in the same factory. He was a chick magnet. Not just girls in the factory, but he also dated Ms. Gang from the quality control department; she was a college graduate. He also dated the girl who played piano. She was the daughter of that Korean buffet restaurant owner across the factory. These days, I heard he is dating a new girl in the accounting department."

"You think that is normal? He is a con artist. He didn't even pay me back the 300,000 won he borrowed from me."

"Anyhow, he is able to do it. Let's accept the fact, bro. He is a high school graduate working as a truck driver in a factory; he is something."

"Let's drop it and drink. Talking about him made me lose my appetite. Drink up!"

"This is fantastic. Drinking soju on the bank of the lake in the moonlight. It's killing me."

"I told you. I come here by myself sometimes."

"I will come with you sometimes, and I will bring soju; you buy a roasted chicken."

Gun-Ho Goo and Jong-Suk Park devoured the roasted chicken; they must have been very hungry.

3 Chapter 3: An Encounter At The Fishing Site 2

After having a chicken leg and wings, Gun-Ho Goo asked Jong-Suk Park.

"Are you actually looking for a job?"

"I've been looking for a job online. There are lots of job openings, but it's not easy to find a good company."

"Why? Are you worried that you might pick a company that is soon going under?"

"That is one of the things I consider. I also cannot stand management power tripping."

"Nothing much you can do about it. We are merely a factory worker."

"You used to work for that kind of manager in a furniture company. And you ended up fighting with the nagging manager, and quit the job."

"Hmm... that's right. But it's my loss. I have no skills for a job; I am just a low ranked college dropout."

"Hey bro, I registered at the Career Center. I want to learn new work skills."

"I've already done it because once I start working, I won't have time to learn new skills. But that causes another problem; I won't be able to make a living if I don't work while I go to school to learn some skills."

"The director at the CAD Learning Center told me that if you have the will to learn, then you can do it. Having no time is just an excuse."

"Damn man! He should put himself in my shoes!"

"Speaking of learning things, you and me, we actually met in an educational institute in Noryangjin. It has been five years already."

"I was surprised when I saw you there. I didn't expect to see a bro from the neighborhood I used to live in."

"I was so surprised as well. I never thought the person next to me having a cupped-rice would be you."

"Bro, you used to do well in studying, didn't you?"

"In Korea, if you don't work for a big company or a government, you are not well respected. Hard to get married as well. At that time, I was running out of money after repeatedly failed the exam for three years."

"Three years of preparation for that exam is normal."

"I was not financially supported to keep taking the exam."

"As you know already, I am not good material for study. It was my father who forced me to study for the civil service exam, so I could get the level-9 government job. That's why I was in Noryangjin studying. I've tried ESL courses and etc., but I am just too dumb to study for the exam."

"How is your father's restaurant business doing in Incheon?"

"Not very good, these days. A new restaurant chain opened next to my father's, and it is seriously affecting his business."

"I see... I wanted to try that exam one more time if someone could support me for one year... I had to give up on my exam when I ran out of money and almost couldn't afford food and to pay the rent. My family wasn't doing well either."

"I just don't understand why old people like level-9 government jobs so much."

"It is actually a good job. You work in a nice office wearing a suit. You don't have to worry about not being paid. They provide you a good government pension. You don't need old people to tell you how good it is to recognize the benefits. It is just hard to get it."

"You must have some money saved up, right?"

"Nada. After I left Noryanjin, I worked in a plastic recycling plant located in

Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province. I worked my socks off there for two years; I saved about 10,000,000 won (around \$10,000). Around that time, I saw a sunshine loan advertisement and inquired about it. When they told me that as long as I have a job they would approve me for the loan, I quickly applied for it. I submitted proof of employment and tax document; I received the loan right away."

"You should have 20,000,000 won in total then. Why are you acting as if you are miserably poor, living in a tiny OneRoom?"

"It is OneRoomTel, not OneRoom."

"OneRoom or OneRoomTel, all same."

"I was going to buy a new car since my old car started making noises and it got too old. It was a used car on an installment plan. Then before I know it, I was doing stocks."

"Stocks? I know no one who didn't lose money by doing stocks."

"Hear me out. Doing stocks is risky of course, but if you have the right information you can make money. That's how I started it."

"Haha. Where does a blue-collar worker like you get such information?"

"Our vendor was a KOSDAQ registered firm. We were told that they were about to apply for a patent and that their stock will go up accordingly, so we all bought their stock."

"That's how you blew all the money."

"Not quite. The stock went up at first. My stock value at that time was 24,000,000 won; I was so happy. I made 4,000,000 won in a month; I invested 20,000,000 won and it went up to 24,000,000 won. Wow. The world looked different. I regretted the choices I made in life. Why did I waste my time and youth in preparing for that civil service exam to get a level-9 job? It's not even a well-paid job."

"And then?"

"I was going to sell the stock a few days later since it was on the way up. Five days later, I opened my stock account. Oh my, the stock value was 18,000,000. I thought it would go up again. A week later, it went down to 12,000,000."

"You lost 8,000,000."

"I wish. An investment consulting company, called WinWin Fund Investment Club, sent me a text; I am not sure how they got my number. They said I could recover my loss in no time and get a noticeable return if I invest in the stocks they pick for me."

"Did you believe that?"

"They sent me their past transaction records. It showed that 20,000,000 was invested and it went up to 60,000,000 won within two months. They charge 2,000,000 won for their service. Once I pay the fee, they said they would give me a list of stocks they picked right away."

"Your glass is empty. Let me fill it up for you. Go on."

"So I paid 2,000,000 won and invested the remaining 10,000,000 won in the stock they picked for me. The stock had been up and down on a roller-coaster ride."

"You got rooked again."

"Don't even get me started on that. I was left with 4,000,000 won in hand after I put 10,000,000 won a week earlier."

"You should have complained to the investment consulting company."

"I did. When I complained to them, they said I should sell the stock at a loss."

"How could they say that? They are so irresponsible."

"When I argued with them, they said it was perfectly normal to sell stocks at a loss sometimes and it happened all the time. They laughed at me saying a person like me shouldn't do stocks."

"Jerks!"

"The remaining 4,000,000 won is gone. I used it for living expense since I hadn't been paid for a while after I moved to another company. I am just left with the debt from the sunshine loan."

"You learned your lesson," Jong-Suk Park chuckled.

"It would be really nice if it was just a lesson. Now I have to pay interest on the loan, and I am suffering for it. The two-year life in Hwaseong became nothing, and all I have is debt."

"Phew. I feel suffocated by listening to your story. That is the money you earned by working your socks off."

"Do you remember Won-Chul? His mother owned a pharmacy in our neighborhood."

"I know him. He was accepted to one of the universities in Seoul?"

"I've heard that Won-Chul is working for a big company after he graduated college. He invested 20,000,000 won in stocks and made 100,000,000 won. F*ck."

"Huh, Wun-Chul bro was the richest in the neighborhood. The luck is also on his side. God is on the rich, not us at all. F*ck. Let's drink."

The two drank soju in the moonlight making slurping sounds. It looks like they drank every drop of booze.

4 Chapter 4. An Encounter At The Fishing Site 3

Gun-Ho got up around 10 in the morning. He has been really lazy since he didn't go to work.

"Should I eat breakfast? Or not?"

The OneRoomTel he was living in provided free rice in a rice cooker, which was located in the laundry room. Cooked rice was always available; the owner prepared for the residents in the OneRoomTel. There was a microwave as well, in the same room.

"If there was a cooktop in the laundry room, I would have been able to cook lomein..."

Licking his lips at the thought of lomein, Gun-Ho opened the refrigerator in his room. Each room in the OneRoomTel had a small refrigerator shorter than a desk.

"Do I have anything to eat?"

Gun-Ho took out a bottle of water from the refrigerator and gulped down water. He further looked in the refrigerator. There were soju, fruit, some left-over pickled radish, and a choco pie.

"I have to have a meal..."

Gun-Ho stepped out of his room with an empty bowl in his hand. He was going to the laundry room to get free rice.

"Eek, why is that guy still here?"

The guy in Room 506 was doing something in the laundry room.

"F*ck, I don't want him to see me with an empty bowl in my hand; it's embarrassing. I ran into him with my empty bowl yesterday."

Gun-Ho closed his door.

"Let's just go out and have a hangover soup!"

After washing his face and brushing his teeth, Gun-Ho went outside. He then got in the car he parked in front of a women's clothing store around the OneRoomTel.

"The store owner didn't come to work yet. If he was here and saw my parked car, he would have snapped at me..."

Gun-Ho often parked on the street because the basement parking lot in the OneRoomTel was too small and always full. As long as you could get your car out of the street before the stores open, there was no problem; otherwise, you would have to bicker with the owners. As soon as he got in the driver's seat, Gun-Ho took a note out of his pocket. A phone number was written on the note; it was the company's number, which Gun-Ho found from WorkNet. That company was hiring a production worker.

"Was it Dongil Tech? I will visit the company after breakfast."

Gun-Ho entered the phone number to the smartphone.

"This is the fastest way to contact them. It will take forever for them to contact me if I apply for the job online, especially for the jobs posted on WorkNet."

"Dongil Tech. How may I help you?"

A lady answered the phone; she sounded a bit old."

"I saw your job advertisement. I am calling to apply for a production worker position."

"Do you have any work experience in the injection molding?"

"Yes, I do. About two years."

"If you don't mind me asking, how old are you?"

"I am 31."

"Do you know where we are located?"

"If you could tell me the address, I can find it using GPS."

The lady gave the address.

"Please bring your resident registration and resume with your photo attached, when you come. You can submit your resident registration once your employment is confirmed."

"Is it ok for me to come today?"

"Come by 3 in the afternoon."

"Thank you. I will see you then."

Gun-Ho felt better. Small factories with less than 30 employees in the countryside usually hired a worker on the spot. Because of the labor shortage, many of them hired even foreign workers. With Gun-Ho's work experience and age, it was easy to get that kind of job. People over 50 had a hard time to find a job because the factory managers didn't want to hire someone older than themselves.

"If I get this job, I will stay until I save enough money as long as they pay me on time. I don't care about the work environment or whatever."

Feeling encouraged and happier, Gun-Ho made a phone call to Jong-Suk Park.

"Hey, what are you doing?"

"Uh, bro, call me later. I am in the middle of an argument with my dad."

Gun-Ho could hear loud talk through the smartphone.

"Okie."

Gun-Ho quickly hung up the phone.

"Jong-Suk seems to be not doing well at home, probably because he works at a factory. His dad obviously wants him to prepare for the level-9 government job exam."

Gun-Ho could picture Jong-Suk's dad fly into a rage and shake his fingers at Jong-Suk.

"In fact, Jong-Suk has issues. He gave up on the exam even though his dad was more than willing to support him."

"Are you confident that you could pass the exam if somebody financially supported you?" Gun-Ho felt like he heard Jong-Suk saying that. Looking at himself in the mirror, Gun-Ho saw a man with empty eyes.

"Loser!"

He really felt like he was a loser.

"I studied strenuously for three years but failed the exam. I worked my socks off for several years, but I am broke. What is wrong with me?"

Gun-Ho looked at his hand holding the steering wheel.

"This hand ... is not the hand of Midas, but the hand of minus..."

The thought of chopping his hand with an ax passed through his mind.

"D*rn it, let's just have a pork rib hangover soup!"

Gun-Ho headed to a hangover soup restaurant.

It was a bit after two in the afternoon. Gun-Ho was not hungry since he had had brunch. In order to better present himself at the interview, Gun-Ho went back to his OneRoomTel and brushed his teeth. He changed his shoes; he was wearing flip-flops so he changed into sneakers.

"Where is this? I've never heard of this area... the plant is located in Yangju, Gyeongsin Town..."

Gun-Ho drove northwest to Gyeongsin Town.

"If I turn left, that leads to Seoul. I am not meant to live in Seoul. Hew."

He felt pathetic about himself. Although he went high school in Bucheon City ("Bucheon"), many of his high school friends worked in a big city like Incheon

and Suwon City ("Suwon"). On the other hand, Gun-Ho kept moving to further north, away from those big cities.

"F*ck my life!"

While feeling sorry for himself, he thought of his aunt. He remembered her talking about a person's fate during the family gathering on New Year's Day.

"There is a famous fortune teller in Gangnam, Seoul. The fortune teller said that my son, Jae-Woong would have a great fortune for the next 20 years."

His aunt boasted about her son while talking about people's fate. Jae-Woong was his cousin, two years younger than Gun-Ho.

"Jae-Woong just passed the civil service exam required for the level-9 position in Department of Labor. Just like that fortune teller said, Jae-Woong's 20-year great fortune must have started."

His aunt kept boasting about her son to Gun-Ho's parents. Gun-Ho's father said with a hollow smile,

"Haha, he surely will be a labor supervisor soon."

"What about Gun-Ho? What are you doing these days? I heard you gave up on the civil service exam and started working?"

His aunt was smiling as she talked; Gun-Ho felt like she was laughing at him.

"Just... a small company I am working for."

"Well, as long as they pay, working for a small company is not bad. Where is it situated?"

"It used to be in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province, and now it moved to Pocheon."

"What is the nature of their business?"

"They manufacture motor vehicle parts."

"Vehicle parts? Terrific. I am impressed. Many young men these days are having a hard time to find a job."

The aunt was snobbish while Gun-Ho's parents felt small, looking down the floor.

Gun-Ho remembered that he had quietly left the room before his aunt started talking to him again.

5 Chapter 5. Got A Job 1

Does fate exist?

Gun-Ho tried to recall unsuccessfully the name of the philosophy hall which his aunt mentioned the other day. His car entered into Yangu and arrived at a town called Deokjeong. He purchased a bottle of water from a convenience store there.

"D*mn. It is really a long way, and I gotta go even further. Should I stop here and go back?"

Gun-Ho drove over a hill and continued for a while to a winding road in the countryside.

"It is nice to have a GPS navigator. It says 1.5 km further to go."

"You have arrived at your destination. Ending the service."

The navigator was ending its routing service. The factory was surrounded by farmlands. It was a mid-sized shabby building.

A lady came out and greeted Gun-Ho with a smile. She introduced herself as a manager.

"It was hard to find the place, wasn't it?"

She seemed to like the fact that Gun-Ho was a young man.

"Since you are young, you must be on the ball. Our director will come soon, and you will have an interview with him."

The man who was driving a forklift in the worksite entered the office. He looked arrogant for a forklift driver.

"Mr. Director, this man is here for an interview."

It turned out that the forklift driver was the director. In this company, a director

must be driving a forklift as well. The director asked Gun-Ho to have a seat while he was sitting at the table.

"Let me see your application."

The director closely looked at Gun-Ho's resume.

"I see that you have work experience with injection molding. We are using a large injection molding machine. You will have to handle plastic crusher machines as well."

"Ok."

"Do you have a Class 2 driver's license? Or Class 1?"

"I have a Class 1."

"Here, you will have to drive a 1-ton truck sometimes. Can you drive manual?"

"Manual... I've done it when I was in the military... I can do it after one or two days of practice."

"We don't have company dormitories here. We do have one, but it is not in a good shape for you; it is mostly used by foreign workers. Since you have injection molding work experience, we'd like to offer a job. You can decide once you look around the work site."

The director called out to someone through the window.

"Mr. Kim! Mr. Kim!"

A man in a red uniform came out from a container office on the other side. He looked like he was in his 40s.

"This man might join us, so please show him around the work site."

Mr. Kim, a team leader brought Gun-Ho inside the factory. It was loud, and Gun-Ho could smell strong chemical odors.

"Is it normal to make this much loud noise?"

"No. You are hearing now the noise from the plastic recycling crusher machine."

"There are a lot of foreign workers here."

"That's right. We have 15 of them."

The foreign workers there glanced up quickly to see Mr. Kim and Gun-Ho. Most foreign workers seemed young while a few Korean workers there looked over 50.

"You work five days a week, right?"

"Basically yes. But most of the time, we work every other Saturday as well."

"How much do they pay?"

"Didn't they tell you about it at the office? It really depends on the work experience you have. So it's not something I can tell you."

Mr. Kim said. He looked somewhat uncomfortable. Gun-Ho figured that Mr. Kim was not a person that was easy to talk to. Gun-Ho changed the subject.

"I was told that you have a large machine, but they all look small."

"The big one is in the site, B. The person who handled that machine left the company. If you join us, you probably will have to work with that machine."

"I hope I could have a chance to learn a lot from you."

"You have work experiences already... where did you work?"

"I worked at Hwaseong and Pocheon."

"You moved around a lot."

Mr. Kim sounded a bit sarcastic, and that made Gun-Ho feel a little offended. Gun-Ho felt an urge to crush his head. But Gun-Ho would have to work with Mr. Kim if he decided to join the company. He'd better get along with Mr. Kim. He bowed and said,

"Thank you for showing me around. It was very helpful."

The company was not big, with approximately 30 employees. Gun-Ho decided to join them for now. The plant was surrounded by farmlands; he liked this setting better than a busy city. Moreover, plastic factories are all the same everywhere.

Mr. Kim didn't seem to be a person who was easy to get along with, but having a soju together and calling him bro should do the trick. On the way out of the factory, Gun-Ho asked Mr. Kim,

"Since there is no company dormitory, where can I find a place to stay?"

"The area where the Gwangjeok Town township office is situated is good. If you prefer Main Street, try Deokjeong Town or Deokgye Town."

After the workplace tour, Gun-Ho came back to the office to see the director. This time, the director gave him a broad smile, and said,

"Did you have a good time? As you see, we are not a big company but we do have a friendly work environment. We have a very low turnover rate. And... for the wages, you will get paid 1,800,000 won per month. We provide free lunch at the temp building over there; Ms. Cook prepares the food every day."

As soon as he heard the number, 180, Gun-Ho started his calculation.

"A rent will cost me 30, gas will be 20, lunch is free, and I can have dinner at home..."

Well, he could survive, but not much would be left to save up.

"If you work with us for more than a year, we can consider raising your salary. Some of our foreign workers take 300 by working overtime, night shifts."

"300!"

It was tempting. He no longer tried to be a government employee. He was going to stay as a blue collar worker anyway; then, why not make 300? There are things, of course, he had to give up. He wouldn't be able to enjoy his after-work life; no dinner time getting-together with friends, no more occasional gatherings for someone's wedding, funeral, or ancestral rites.

"After one year of working with us, you will get promoted, and then we pay for your gas as well."

"When can I start?"

"Let me see... today is Thursday..."

The director looked at the calendar on the wall.

"Let's start on Monday. If you are not from this area, you will need a few days to find a place to stay. Oh, I saw an ad on the way to the work this morning; it was about a rent without security deposit in Gwangjeok Town. You probably want to check it out."

"Thank you."

"When you come on Monday, please bring a copy of your resident registration and another copy of your bank statement."

"I will do that."

Gun-Ho left the office courteously expressing his appreciation for the opportunity. He got the job. While he was at it, Gun-Ho decided to explore the area around Gwangjeok Town township office.

"Gwangjeok Town, Yangju City... I've never heard of this area before, and I will be working here."

Suddenly his smartphone started ringing. It was from Capital financial institution; his sunshine loan was from them.

"You are behind on your payments. How soon can you make the payment?"

The call just killed Gun-Ho's happy moment.

"Ok. I will send it right away."

"If you don't make a payment by the 5th of this month and your account is still overdue, it could affect your credit."

The voice of Capital representative sounded like the Grim Reaper.

"Hew..." He sighed.

Gun-Ho deeply regretted ever having done stocks.

6 Chapter 6. Got A Job 2

Receiving a phone call from a Capital representative was a real downer. They never forgot to call to demand the interest overdue.

"After paying my loan interest out of the salary 180, nothing much will be left in my hands. I will probably have to work an additional night shift just like those foreign workers. The night shift is paid 1.5 times more... So that's what I have to do. I have messed up my life, big time."

The image of government employees working in a big city hall or county office flashed through Gun-Ho's mind along with his friend, Won-Chul working in a big firm wearing a white shirt and tie.

"Won-Chul is making 5,000 per year, isn't he?"

Gun-Ho's face was distorted by frustration.

"I am and will be living in poverty just like my father has been. F*ck!"

Gun-Ho was heading to Gwangjeok Town ("Gwangjeok") in his old shabby car, making a clunking noise when the name of the philosophy hall his aunt talked about hit him.

"That's right! It was Jinyeo Philosophy Hall!"

Gun-Ho felt better once he successfully recalled the name.

"I don't believe in fate but I can try, don't I? I am wondering where my life went wrong? And if I will stay as a factory worker for the rest of my life. If the head of the philosophy hall is that good, he must have something to tell me about my life, doesn't he?"

Gun-Ho shook his head.

"Nah, they don't know anything. If they do, why are they just running the philosophy hall?"

Gun-Ho indeed disbelieved fortune tellers because he had a bad experience with them. When he was 21 years old right before he joined the military, he went to a fortune-reading cafe in Insa Town. Anything he was told there was not true and he just wasted money paying for it. Consequently, he considered them all con artists.

"Nevertheless, because of all the fuss my aunt made, I am curious about it."

Gun-Ho finally arrived at Gwangjeok Township Office area. He didn't expect to see this many commercial stores and restaurants. There were a hospital, pharmacy, bank and supermarket that you don't often see in a small town. Several new villas were there; he could see lots of ads for rent. Some of them didn't require a security deposit.

"It's only 4 o'clock. I will have time to look around."

Gun-Ho at first visited the rental home without a security deposit requirement. It didn't come with kitchen appliances. The one asking one month's rent for a security deposit provided essential kitchen appliances. Gun-Ho liked it; the room was clean since it was in a new building.

"Oooh, this is a palace comparing to those rooms in Noryanjin!"

Those OneRooms in Noryangjin were asking higher rent and they didn't even have windows; they were in poor condition as well.

"I don't have many stuff. I can move in tomorrow."

Gun-Ho left for his current place to Sohol Town in Pocheon. He was listening to a rap song when he received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro, what are you doing? Did you find a job?"

"I just had an interview. I am on my way home now."

"Really? That's good. What kind of company?"

"Plastic Injection Molding Company, of course since I have work experience with it. I will start this coming Monday."

"Where is it?"

"Gyeongsin Town in Yangju."

"Geyongsin Town? Where is that?"

"It is in Yangju."

"Yangju City? Not Namyangju City?"

"No. It is Yangju located above Uijeongbu City."

"Let's go fishing to the same place. You start on Monday so you can go fishing tomorrow."

"I have to move tomorrow."

"Haha, bro, you have nothing to move. You only have a few clothes and a laptop. You can move them the day after tomorrow, and let's go fishing tomorrow. I read online that someone caught a 30cm bass and a 50cm catfish there."

"You are so into fishing."

"You are the one who introduced me to fishing in the first place."

"Ok. Let's go."

"Since tomorrow is not Sunday, there won't be many people fishing."

"Come to pick me up by 10 AM to my place."

"Okie."

Gun-Ho thought that since he got the job, it was ok to have some fun fishing with Jong-Suk tomorrow.

Thinking of having soju with a roasted chicken whet his appetite already.

The next day, Gun-Ho went to the reservoir in Pocheon with Jong-Suk.

"I love this reservoir. Not many people know about here and it's not crowdy."

"Right. Not many people coming here; no reservoir custodian who is asking for fees. Bro, once you start your new job at Yangju, let's come here sometimes when you are off."

"It's too far. I have to save gas."

"Then you find a good fishing site in Yangju."

"Huh? I didn't expect anyone here. That Genesis limousine is here today again."

"Damn. They took our lucky spot again."

"Look, they are the same folks, one in his 40s and the other in his 60s."

Those two men turned their heads to look at Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk; they must have heard them talking.

"They must think that why do young men come fishing on weekdays, not going to work."

"Don't worry about them. They are here on weekdays as well. They must be a bankrupt business owner or a crook on the run."

"Their car looks good. It's new"

"Crooks drive nice cars."

"Bro, what year is your car?"

"It's 10 years old. Why?"

"It's still going? How many km is on your car?"

"200,000. It still works fine. I can cross the entire U.S. nation from the east coast to the west with this car."

"Aren't you gonna repair peeling paint on your rear bumper?"

"I don't have time for that."

"You don't have money for that."

"You, f*cker!"

"Haha. I take it back, take it back."

Responding to their loud talk, the man in his 40s turned his head looking at them with a scowl.

"He doesn't look nice at all."

"He is evil-looking."

"Shhh, he can hear you. Keep it down."

Gun-Ho went to the fishing spot where those two men, in his 40s and 60s, were fishing.

"Did you catch any?"

The man in his 60s shook his head side to side with a smile in his eyes.

"Is he a mute?"

Gun-Ho moved to another spot. He put down his bag and fishing rod under the chestnut tree across the reservoir.

"Huh! It's Gimbap (cooked rice and other ingredients rolled in dried seaweed), not a roasted chicken!"

"I thought you would bring a roasted chicken."

"I thought you would, bro."

"I have to save money, until my next payday."

"Eek! Look over there. A fish the size of a forearm just jumped out of the water. I have a good feeling about fishing today."

"None for you. Lots of fish for me though."

"F*ck you."

That day, Gun-Ho actually caught a bass. He got a job and caught a fish; it was a good day for him. When he was about to release the fish, Jong-Suk ran to him."

"Wow. It's huge. It's a little smaller than the one I just missed, but it is huge."

"The fish that slipped away always seems bigger."

"No, it was really huge."

"Jong-Suk, let's have Gimbap. If you are not going to take the bass, maybe I should give it to those two men?"

"Them? They are no longer here."

Gun-Ho looked at the spot where those two men were fishing; they are gone already.

7 Chapter 7. Got A Job 3

It was Saturday. Gun-Ho vacated his room from OneRoomTel and loaded up his car with his belonging.

"Once I took out all my stuff, I certainly do have a lot of stuff. I didn't know that when they were all in the room."

Gun-Ho had to travel back and forth three times between his room and the parking lot to load up all his stuff – off-season clothes, a laptop, a blanket, books, etc. There were a lot. He had to throw out a few books and left-over soju from the refrigerator, such a waste. Gun-Ho received a call from his aunt when he was loading the car while panting heavily.

"Gun-Ho? You don't go to church these days, do you? A person must believe in God."

While he was busy in loading stuff, his aunt talked to him for a while, trying to convince him to go to church.

"Auntie, I gotta go. I am in the middle of moving. Why don't you call me later?"

"Oh, oh, are you moving? Where are you moving to? You must be moving to a nice place. God already planned our lives. If you let me know the address, I will stop by. There must be a church in the area. If you believe in God, you will be blessed."

Gun-Ho desperately wanted to hang up the phone while his aunt kept talking and talking; it drove him crazy. If he responded to any of what she was saying, she probably would add more saying to it. So he just simply answered with yes, yes.

"Are you listening? You have to go to church. Oh, and have you had the chance to go to that philosophy hall that I told you about? You haven't?"

"I don't believe any of those."

His aunt had talked for at least 30 minutes before she finally ended the call.

"I should have ignored the call... well, why does she go to a philosophy hall? She is going to church; she is even a deaconess."

Gun-Ho laughed. Finally, he finished moving and laid down in his new room. It was hard work, and he felt somewhat relieved. He went out having Jjajangmyeon (noodle dish topped with black bean sauce) and came back, and laid down again.

"Tomorrow is Sunday. Maybe I want to go to Bucheon to see friends. Maybe, I'd better check if the internet is working."

The new place already had internet working. That was nice. These days, many landlords made the internet service ready to use, in addition to providing a refrigerator, a washer, and an air conditioner; that way, the room was rented out quickly.

"I do like the internet speed here. Let me see. Let me search the philosophy hall in Gangnam, that my aunt talked about. Was it Jinyeo Philosophy Hall?"

Philosophy halls do advertise their service on the internet, showing their addresses and phone numbers. There were a lot of philosophy halls.

"Oh my, we have this many philosophy halls in Korea? Do they even make a living?"

Gun-Ho found Jinyeo Philosophy Hall. Their main number was displayed.

"Let me call them for some fun."

It rang a few times before an old man picked up the phone in a gruff voice.

"Jinyeo Philosophy Hall. How may I help you?"

"I'd like to talk to the head of the hall."

"This is he."

"Oh, hello. Do you by any chance open tomorrow? It's Sunday."

"We don't do consultation on Sunday. I go to the mountains on Sunday."

"Oh, you do mountain climbing."

"No, not mountain climbing, but mountain prayer."

"Mountain prayer? I see, then I will call you again next time."

After he hung up the phone, Gun-Ho giggled.

"Mountain prayer? My a*s. I am sure he goes mountain climbing, not mountain prayer. He knows how to play his role. Anyhow, I want to hear what he has to say about my f*cked-up life."

Gun-Ho went to work on Monday.

The director told him to get work instructions from Mr. Kim. The worksite Mr. Kim brought Gun-Ho in was not the plastic injection molding site, but a washing room for plastic drums. He could smell strong chemical odors.

"All of our new workers have to start from here."

"This is a washing room."

"We wash plastic drums and also crush plastics here. After you work with the washing team, then with the crushing team, and then you will work with an injection machine."

Gun-Ho got angry. He wanted to scream that he didn't come here to wash the damn plastic drums but to operate the injection molding machine. Mr. Kim's smiling facial expression said it all: take it or leave. He already moved all his stuff here; he is in a hard-pressed situation. He wanted to ask the director for an explanation.

"I joined the company as an injection molding machine operator."

"I know that. But our company policy requires every new employee to spend 3 months working at the washing site and crushing site."

"F*ckers!"

Gun-Ho almost said it but suppressed the urge. Washing and crushing plants

usually generated bad odors. Especially crushing plants produced loud noise; that's why they often had a high turnover rate. And probably that's why Gun-Ho was placed in these plants to fill the empty jobs. Gun-Ho was thinking; maybe it was not a bad thing to work in that site. The work would be a little hard tedious physical labor job, but he would get paid the same salary.

"All right. I will start with the washing job."

There was another worker already working on the site; he seemed in his 50s. He handed a pair of rubber gloves and a scrub brush to Gun-Ho. He had a blank face and he was quiet.

"You need to pour the chemical residues in the drum here. If the chemical remains got in contact with your skin, they will cause blisters and itchy skin; so please make sure you wear arm covers when you work. Also, you need to be extra careful not to let the chemicals into your eyes."

"Sh*t!"

Gun-Ho blurted out a curse word. He did as the senior worker instructed. The senior worker proceeded to the cleaning process. He first wiped off the plastic drum with an air suction device, then sprayed some mixed chemicals, and then cleaned with a steamer. The last step was to clean them with water; this was Gun-Ho's job. After washing 100 drums, he felt dizzy and spinning, while also feeling severe lower back pain.

"Can I have a break?"

The senior worker looked surprised. He probably thought what Gun-Ho had done so far was not hard enough to earn a break.

"Suit yourself. We usually take a break every two hours. You have worked for almost two hours, so why don't you just keep working until then?"

The senior worker was way older than Gun-Ho, but he kept working without a break and he was strong. He probably had done physical labor work all his life.

"I felt dizzy working the same washing job all day long."

Gun-Ho passed out once he returned to his room after work.

"I should have passed the exam and taken the level-9 government job..."

Not being able to become a level-9 government employee would be his lasting regret. If he could go back to Noryangjin, he would study so hard like he was ready to die if he didn't pass the exam.

"I... I... didn't study hard when I was in school. This is my punishment for that."

Gun-Ho felt deep sorrow.

"This is how people develop chronic illnesses and depression. Sh*t! Let's just drink."

Gun-Ho went out in his comfy sweatpants and bought three bottles of soju from a convenience store.

The next day and the next day, he kept washing the drums at work. All of his body ached, his arms, neck and especially his lower back. He applied pain relief patches on his body.

"I think I have to find a new job."

Then he thought in desperation that the life of a factory worker would be the same everywhere.

"The work itself was ok when I was in Pocheon. They just didn't pay..."

When he worked in Pocheon, he had spare time after work; he sometimes went to the PC room in the evening and played computer games. Here in Yangju, it was far from that life. He always passed out after work at home, no more soju or computer games. He received text messages from some of his friends; they asked Gun-Ho to come to the high school reunion, and one of the friends who had a nice job invited Gun-Ho to his wedding.

"I should give up on marrying someone, shouldn't I?"

Gun-Ho thought hard; it seemed impossible for him to get married. He had no girlfriend; it just seemed impossible for him to start a family for now and also in the future.

"My life will end working in a small factory forever... Hew." Gun-Ho sighed.

Gun-Ho drank everyday after work in his room. Looking at his reflection in the mirror, Gun-Ho thought he looked so old; he hated it. Suddenly, he thought of that philosophy hall which his aunt mentioned the other day.

8 Chapter 8. Master Park, A Fortune Teller From Gangnam 1

Gun-Ho's desperate and distressed life as a factory worker made him want to consult the fortune teller about his life, whom his aunt mentioned.

"I don't believe in fate, but I am miserable enough to talk to anyone who could tell me about how to fix my life."

Gun-Ho drank again by himself in his room. He felt like without alcohol he wouldn't be able to go another day.

Gun-Ho's work would start at 8 AM. At 10, he could take a 15-minute break time. He made a call to that philosophy hall that his aunt mentioned during the break. This time, a lady answered the phone.

"Our master is with a client right now. What can I do for you?"

"Um... when will you close today?"

"We are fully booked today."

"What about tomorrow?"

"He won't be available tomorrow either."

"Does he give consultations on Saturdays and Sundays as well?"

"On Sundays, our master goes to the mountains to pray. He is available on Saturdays."

"I will come on Saturday then."

"I will make a reservation at 11 AM on Saturday for you."

"Thank you."

This fortune teller must be very popular; Gun-Ho thought after he hung up the phone. His sessions were already fully booked for the next few days. He must be good at what he was doing. On the other hand, Gun-Ho was skeptical about the reservation thing.

"Maybe it was all an act pretending they had a lot of clients, and in fact they had none."

Gun-Ho's new company worked 5 days a week. He had to work on Saturday sometimes, and he made a reservation with the fortune teller on a Saturday, he didn't have to work. Gun-Ho took the subway heading to Seoul; he enjoyed this relaxing trip. It had been a while since he visited Seoul. While sitting on the subway, an old man got on and stood in front of Gun-Ho; Gun-Ho pretended to be busy with his smartphone not wanting to offer his seat to the old man. At that moment, his phone rang.

"Gun-Ho? It's me, Won-Chul, your high school classmate."

"Won-Chul Jo, it has been a while."

It was Won-Chul; his mom had a pharmacy in the neighborhood and he was working for a big and nice company. It was unexpected to hear from him.

"Can you talk?"

"Sure. How did you get my number?"

"Yeah, I ran into Jong-Suk at a restaurant in Yeouido Island the other day. I heard you are working for a company?"

"Uh, yeah... it is a small company. I was told that you are working for H Group. Did you get promoted already?"

"Yeah, I am just an assistant manager."

"Big company pays well, right? How much do they pay?"

"Not much. Our company is cheap. I get around 7,000."

Gun-Ho almost let out a groan. He was being paid a little over 2,000 yearly. The

gap between Gun-Ho's salary and Won-Chul's was like the gap between land and sky."

"You get a lot. Our company doesn't pay much at all since it is a small firm."

I heard many small companies unexpectedly pay well. Since you have been in the field for several years now, you're probably getting paid well, right?"

"Our company doesn't."

"How much? 6,000?"

'6,000 my as*, f*ck.' Gun-Ho thought.

"Don't let me start. It's depressing. By the way, is your mom still running the pharmacy in Bucheon?"

"No, she moved to Mok Town, Seoul. My older sister is working in a hospital in Mok Town. The pharmacy is in the same building as her hospital."

"Oh, really? Since the pharmacy is associated with a hospital, they must be getting lots of customers. How much does she make?"

"I am not so sure. Probably around 2,000 per month."

Gun-Ho almost let out a groan again. Monthly income was 2,000; that was his yearly salary.

"Actually, I am calling you today for my wedding. I am getting married on the 5th next month. I was going to send you my wedding invitation, and I realized that I didn't have your address. That's why I am calling you."

"Really? Congratulations. Well, you don't have to mail me the invitation. Why don't you just take a picture of the invitation letter and text me through KaTalk (a mobile instant messaging application)?"

"I will do that."

"What does your bride do for a living?"

"She is a pharmacist. I didn't like a pharmacist because of my mom, but it

happened anyway."

The image of Won-Chul's classy looking face with fair skin and his pretty bride flashed through Gun-Ho's mind.

"Ok. I will be there. I am heading somewhere right now."

"Where? Somewhere nice?"

"Nah. I'm going to a philosophy hall. Someone introduced me to a popular philosophy hall in Gangnam."

"Haha, you are going there to see your marital compatibility, huh? Where is it?"

"It's around the Gangnam subway station, called Jinyeo Philosophy Hall. I was told he is good."

"Jinyeo Philosophy Hall? My mom goes there pretty often. Master Park at Jinyeo Philosophy Hall is very popular among ladies in Gangnam. Well, good luck there."

"Ok, thank you. I will see you at your wedding. Bye."

After getting off the phone with Won-Chul, Gun-Ho received a call from his mom.

"Why are you calling me? Aren't you working at a nursing home right now?"

"I am at home. I got off early from the nursing home today. I am so sick and tired of cleaning old people's shit."

"Why did you call me?"

"Oh, what was I thinking. Um, it's about your dad."

"What about him?"

"Your dad is now fully recovered from his lower back problem. So he wants to look for a job, maybe a security guard."

"So? What does it have to do with me?"

"Have you seen your dad's training certificate for a new security guard? He placed it in your desk drawer. He needs that."

"I don't know! Why are you asking me!"

"Why are you yelling at me? You could just say you didn't know. I'm hanging up."

"Shit."

After Gun-Ho received calls from his mom and Won-Chul, he already arrived at the Gangnam station before he was even aware of it.

The Gangnam station was overcrowded with people of course. It was hard to even walk. It was so different from Gwangjeok Town, Yangju City, Gyeonggi Province where Gun-Ho was currently living in.

"These two are different countries. Korea has Gangnam state and a provincial state separately. Oh my, there are a lot of pretty girls here."

Those girls pouring out of cafes and stores around the area all looked sophisticated and pretty. They seemed to be out of his league; Gun-Ho was just a factory worker in the countryside. Gun-Ho accidentally entered into Samsung Electronics headquarters.

"Oooh, nice building."

Young people wearing their company ID cards around their neck passed in front of Gun-Ho; they looked arrogant.

"If I was reborn, could I be on the same level as they?"

Gun-Ho envied them. He took out his memo.

"Jinyeo Philosophy Hall must be on the 8th floor in an office-tel around here..."

The name of the office-tel was... what? A light of a city? Go to the Bangbang four-way intersection? Where is the Bangbang four-way intersection?"

Gun-Ho had to walk for quite a while before he found the office-tel. He went up

to the 8th floor in the elevator. The sign on the door of Jinyeo Philosophy Hall was so small that he almost missed it.

"This is it."

Gun-Ho knocked on the door and then entered into the office. An office-tel was usually small, but this one was large, probably around 40 pyung. He could see a few middle-aged women sitting in the chair wearing expensive clothes. There was a desk for a receptionist. The receptionist was wearing glasses, and she seemed to be in her early 30s.

9 Chapter 9. Master Park, A Fortune Teller From Gangnam 2

It was Gun-Ho's first visit to a philosophy hall in an office-tel. He had been in a fortune-reading café and tarot-reading place around an educational institute area, for fun. Those places didn't charge much, around 5,000 won or 10,000 won.

'How much do they charge for a consultation?'

Gun-Ho felt small looking at the luxurious office interior and the ladies who were waiting for their turns; they surely looked wealthy. The receptionist talked to him with a smile,

"You have an 11 o'clock reservation, right? The people before you took more time than expected, so you will have your consultation around noon; is that ok with you? Would you like to have green tea?"

"Oh, no thank you. I will wait."

Gun-Ho was standing awkwardly and then sat on the edge of a sofa. The ladies looked at him at the same time; his cheeks burned with embarrassment. He felt like those ladies were wondering what this young man came here for.

"Hum, hum."

After Gun-Ho cleared his throat, he thoroughly looked at the office wall. On the wall, it said that the consultation fee was 100,000 won. He patted his pocket. He thought the consultation fee would be around 30,000 won. 100,000 won was too damn expensive.

One person came out of the office after consultation. She looked like she was in her 50s and seemed very classy. She paid 100,000 won to the receptionist and left. One of the ladies mumbled,

"That lady who just left seemed very sophisticated. She was wearing expensive clothes and carrying a designer bag."

The receptionist responded,

"Do you know who she is? She is the wife of OO secretary."

"Oh, of course. She looked classy and sophisticated."

"Don't tell anyone that she came here."

"Don't worry. I have no one to tell. By the way, Miss, how come there are lots of people today. I thought the consultation is given only in the morning on Saturdays."

"Right. We usually get 15 people on Saturdays and around 30 on weekdays."

Gun-Ho started calculating in his head.

'The consultation fee is 100,000. They get 30 people on weekdays... Huck! 3,000,000 won per day!'

Gun-Ho was amazed.

"Oh my goodness! Their daily income is more than what I make in a month!"

When Gun-Ho was living in Bucheon, he had a neighbor, uncle Jae-Sik. He once opened a philosophy hall then closed it because he couldn't even afford to pay the rent. Here, it is on another level. According to uncle Jae-Sik, except for a few rising fortune tellers, most of them maybe 90% of them made less than 800,000 won per month and couldn't afford to pay the rent.

"Jinyeo Philosophy Hall is truly popular."

Gun-Ho seemed to be the last client today. No one else came in after him. There had been some incoming calls for reservations. After one boring hour, it was finally Gun-Ho's turn.

"You have waited a while. Our master is waiting for you now."

The receptionist who was wearing glasses gave Gun-Ho a gesture that he could already enter the room. He opened the consultation room door. There was a man in his 60s sitting in a big chair; he was wearing a white shirt and tie.

"You must have waited for quite some time. Come and have a seat."

Gun-Ho sat on the guest chair in front of a large table. Gun-Ho expected to see a fortune teller wearing at least modernized Korean traditional clothes if not a typical outfit for a fortune teller, but he dressed like a gentleman with a tie. If looked at closely, he looked more like a professor rather than a fortune teller.

"I am Pan-Soo Park, the head of Jinyeo Philosophy Hall. People call me Master Park. Give me your date of birth."

"Gun-Ho gave him his date of birth.

"Is it according to the lunar calendar? What about the time of birth?"

"I was told that my mother gave birth to me after breakfast, around 9 AM."

"I believe it is Jin o'clock. You must be working with chemicals right now."

Gun-Ho's eyes widened. He was actually working with chemicals everyday washing drums at a plastic factory.

"Quit drinking!"

He unexpectedly started talking to Gun-Ho as if he was talking to someone a lot younger than him. He must've known that Gun-Ho drank every day by himself in his room, being distressed about his life. Gun-Ho blushed with embarrassment. Master Park took some time writing something on a paper. He scribbled in Chinese; it was difficult for Gun-Ho to read. Master Park continued writing for another five minutes without a word.

"Hmm..."

Master Park let out a moan looking at the note he just wrote.

"What is it? Are you seeing bad signs?"

Without responding to Gun-Ho's question, Master Park kept looking at his note. Gun-Ho thought that of course, he had seen bad signs; there was no reason or hope that a factory worker's life would get better, and that was why Master Park moan, he felt suffocated because of Gun-Ho's life. At that moment, someone

knocked on the door. It was the receptionist.

"Excuse me, Sir, Chairman Lee is here. Do you want me to tell him to wait?"

"Huh? Chairman Lee? Let him in!"

A man in a suit that looked like he was already in his 60s came inside the room and then hesitated to enter when he saw Gun-Ho.

"Is it ok for me to come in? You are with a client."

"It's ok. Come and sit with me!"

Chairman Lee didn't sit on the chair but he stood next to the table.

"Look at the note. This is the fate of this young man who is sitting in front of us."

"Can I read it? It's about your client."

Chairman Lee nodded to Gun-Ho in greeting.

"Look at this. This is the fate of ShinWangJaeWang."

"Hmmm... It really is."

Chairman Lee said in a low voice looking over his glasses at the note that Master Park handed to him.

"ShinWangJaeWang?"

Gun-Ho thought they were giving him some cock-and-bull story.

"Moreover, he has Yang energy."

"He is getting enormous fortune too."

Master Park said looking at Gun-Ho while reclining his seat; he looked grim.

"Young man, you are born to be extremely rich. You will rake in a fortune."

"Me? I am working in a factory right now."

"I know. With your current luck, working in a factory is more than what your fate allows. You didn't get a proper education, did you?"

Master Park smiled craning his neck while locking his eyes with Gun-Ho; he was seemingly teasing Gun-Ho.

"I dropped out of a low-ranked college in the countryside, and then graduated from a cyber college."

"That is more than you were supposed to get. You could have not attended any school at all."

"Does that mean my life will get better?"

"Don't worry. You will be in a position hiring those people who graduated from top universities, a.k.a. SKY! In a position like a president in a big company."

Gun-Ho felt offended thinking that Master Park was telling him an absurd story just to make that 100,000 won. At that moment, Chairman Lee who was standing next to Master Park said staring at Gun-Ho,

"Wait a minute. You look familiar, young man."

"Me?"

Gun-Ho looked at Chairman Lee. He surely seemed familiar.

"Ohhh, I saw you at the fishing site in Pocheon."

Gun-Ho also remembered him. He was the man in his 60s at the fishing site, who came in that Genesis limousine.

"Huh? You have met each other already? At the fishing site in Pocheon? That's where your vacation home is in, Chairman Lee, right? Haha. You two were probably meant to meet each other."

Master Park laughed out loud and sipped his green tea. He then said craning his neck again,

"Young man, do you know who Chairman Lee is? He owns several buildings in Cheongdam Town ("Cheongdam"); he is a miser. Even so, Chairman Lee is a millionaire, and you are a billionaire. I feel so good to see a person with ShinWangJaeWang fate attached with a significant fortune; it has been a while since I saw this type of fate. I will remember your name for a long time. Your name is Gun-Ho Goo, isn't it? Gun means establishing, and Ho means big, right?"

"Yes, that's correct."

"Ok. Even though you feel desperate and distressed in your life right now, don't worry about it. After five years or so, you will be substantially rich. I will take only 50,000 won for a fee from you, young man."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho bowed deeply low to Master Park. He also bowed courteously to Chairman Lee. Gun-Ho headed to the Gangnam station from the philosophy hall. Even if the story Master Park told him sounded absurd, Gun-Ho felt good thinking of being a rich man someday. For now, he felt like that all those tall buildings and people around him were smiling at him and applauding to bless him.

10 Chapter 10. Master Park, A Fortune Teller From Gangnam 3

Gun-Ho went back to reality. Visiting the famous philosophy hall in Gangnam seemed like a dream.

"Master Park could be a first-class con artist. How can a man know another man's fate? "

His phone was ringing; it was Jong-Suk.

"Hey, bro! Where did you go last Saturday?"

"I went to a famous philosophy hall in Gangnam."

"A philosophy hall? That's superstition."

"Well, I agree but..."

"What did they tell you?"

"They said I would be very very rich like a billionaire."

"Puhaha. How can a factory worker like us become rich? With a monthly salary of less than 2,000,000 won. Even if we save doggedly 1,000,000 out of it for ten years, we will have 120,000,000 won in hand. And if you marry, you will have a kid, and raising a kid cost money."

Gun-Ho, let out a groan.

"If you don't get married, and keep saving half of your salary for 30 years until you reach 60, you will have 360,000,000 in hand. Do you have any idea how much it cost to buy a condo in Gangnam nowadays? It's about 1,000,000,000 won. Become rich my ass."

"Hew... I hear you." Gun-Ho sighed.

"Don't waste your time in talking to those people. They are all con artists. I read somewhere that knowing a person's fate is within God's domain, not another human's."

"I went there because Won-Chul's mom often goes there too... They are very popular."

"Oh, I was actually calling you to talk about Won-Chul. He is getting married."

"I already received a phone call from him."

"You did? Let's meet up in front of the City Hall around 12:30. We can go to the wedding together."

"Okay, let's do that."

"You need to get married as well, bro."

"Me, I gave up. We are 3-GivingUp, 5-GivingUp people, aren't we?"

"You are still doing the self-dissing thing. I gotta go. I have an interview today."

"Which company?"

"I don't know, something Tech. It is probably a majjikkoba factory (small factory)."

"Ok. Good luck."

After he got off the phone with Jong-Suk, Gun-Ho looked at the calendar on the wall. Won-Chul's wedding was on the day before his payday, of all things.

"Shit, I have to pay the loan's interest and his wedding... How much should I give for his wedding? Usually, 50,000 won will do; I probably have to give more than that, don't I? He is from a wealthy family, and he is making good money working for a big company; I should probably give 100,000 won at least. What am I gonna do?"

Gun-Ho just started his new job, and his payday was still too far away. Gun-Ho agonized with a frown on his face.

"I, Gun-Ho Goo, have to feel distressed because of a small amount of money, 100,000 won. F*ck the world! Sh*t!"

Gun-Ho hit the floor with his fist.

"Anyway, what should I wear to Won-Chul's wedding?"

Gun-Ho took out a soju from the refrigerator without thinking and started drinking with dried seaweed snacks on the table.

"Everyone is getting married except me. I have no hope for it. Ehhyo..."

Gun-Ho seemed like he was pouring soju into his throat rather than drinking it normally.

The director asked Gun-Ho to come to his office.

"Mr. Goo, how is your work going here?"

"I am not really sure. I am just doing my best."

"You don't have to wash drums anymore. The lady who used to do the job will come back today. So you can move to the crushing site. She will arrive around 10 AM, so you can hand over to her if there is anything."

"Alright. I will do that."

In the crushing site, Gun-Ho would handle crushing machines; but washing site and crushing site, they were the same. The work would probably be easier even though the site produced a loud noise. The good thing was that he didn't have to see Mr. Kim anymore; he was a pain in the as*.

The washing lady came. Gun-Ho heard that she had to quit the job because of her child; since her child started school, she could come back to work. The lady had a big round face just like a round tray; her eyes looked like date seeds. She had a broad smile on her face when she came. Mr. Kim made a fuss about her return since he used to work with her.

"Oh my goodness. You look even younger."

"Mr. Kim, you are the one who looks younger. Who is this young man? An intern?"

"No, he is our new employee. He will hand over to you today and move to the crushing site."

"Oh really? Haha. He is good looking."

Gun-Ho looked at the lady. She was not good looking, but she sure looked strong; her arms were thicker than Gun-Ho's.

"You need to stack the chemical-A drums up by the forklift. For chemical-B drums, you can stack them up behind the container. Each of their lids has labels attached. Also, you need to wash well the mouths of chemical-B drums; otherwise, we will receive claims once we deliver the unclean drums."

"Haha, you don't have to explain all that to me. I am familiar with it. There are a few drums here; I will move them there. They are obstructing the way of the forklift."

She rolled up her sleeves and dragged two drums to the stacking place. Gun-Ho usually moved drums one by one; the lady dragged two and stacked those drums 5 level up.

"Wow. She is full of energy!"

Gun-Ho was impressed by her skills and energy.

"I am not even good at a factory job."

Gun-Ho briefly handed over to her and went to the crushing site. The team leader in the crushing site was tall and in his 50s.

"Hi, I am Gun-Ho Goo. I am assigned to the crushing site today."

Gun-Ho was expecting a handshake since it was his first time meeting the team leader, but it didn't happen.

"Hey, do not stand there. You just touched the power cord!"

Gun-Ho realized that he touched the outlet where several power plugs were connected.

"Oops! I am so sorry."

"Come this way. The forklift is on its way in!"

The forklift loaded with an enormous amount of plastic waste just came in.

There was a foreign worker in the crushing site; he smiled when he saw Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho had seen lots of cute foreigners before, but this guy was dark and looked nasty. That foreigner was wearing a noise-canceling headphone and a mask.

"Did you bring a headphone?"

The team leader asked Gun-Ho.

"Umm, I didn't receive any instruction about that."

"You didn't bring one."

The team leader looked around, and then picked up a headphone from a broken metal desk and tossed it to Gun-Ho.

"Use mine."

The headphone looked really dirty; Gun-Ho was standing there looking down at the headphone. As Gun-Ho seemed to hesitate to wear it, the team leader looked at Gun-Ho; Gun-Ho might look pathetic.

"For today, you could just bring some drum waste to that foreign worker."

"Okay."

As the team leader turned on a switch, Gun-Ho started hearing a loud noise. The foreign worker poured white chemicals into a small container; Gun-Ho smelled a nasty and strong odor. Gun-Ho almost threw up because of the smell.

After work, Gun-Ho came back to his room. He felt like he could still smell the chemicals from his clothes. He felt pain in his lower back and left wrist; that was

probably because Gun-Ho carried a lot of plastic container waste today. Gun-Ho rummaged through the contents of his desk drawer to find pain relief patches.

"These patches are old. I am not sure if they are still effective."

Gun-Ho applied the patches to his left wrist and lower back. He was too tired to cook dinner; he started preparing lomein. After having lomein, he laid down on the bed; he could smell foot odor from his bed. He played with his smartphone while laying down on his bed, and then he started wondering how Jong-Suk did at the interview. He called Jong-Suk.

11 Chapter 11. Chairman Lee, Cheongdam Town Building Owner 1

The phone had rung for a while before someone answered the phone.

"Jong-Suk?"

"Oh, bro!"

"Why didn't you pick up the phone quickly?"

"I was in the bathroom."

"How did the interview go?"

"I didn't go to the interview."

"Why not?"

"My dad told me not to."

"Why?"

"He said if I don't think I have the aptitude for a government job, I should try the police exam."

"Being a policeman is good. It will be highly competitive though; I am sure there are a lot of people who are preparing for the exam."

"That's why I want to first take a qualifying exam."

"A qualifying exam?"

"Remember? I registered at the Career Center last time. You did it too."

"Yes, I did."

"I want to prepare for a qualification test for welders or electricians. Having a skill certificate will add extra points to the police exam score."

"Hmmm. Do you think you have the aptitude for police work?"

"I can't say that I don't or I do, but since my parents want that much, I am willing to try it."

"Then are you going back to Noryangjin?"

"I have another option, Ingang... but I think I should take the course from Kyungdangi in Noryangjin."

"That's a good idea. In fact, there is no hope for a factory worker. The work is hard, and the pay is low. If you know someone who wants to work at a factory, we should talk him out of starting it."

"Bro, why don't you study with me?"

"I gave up. I have to work. You have your parents who can financially support you."

"It would have been really nice if you have some money saved up... I wish you hadn't lost your money in the stock market..."

"Let's not talk about that. It makes me sick every time I think about stocks."

"Haha. Ok."

"I will let you go. Good night."

"Bye!"

After getting off the phone with Jong-Suk, Gun-Ho gave some thought to it.

"Should I get a skill certificate? If I learn forklift driving or welding skills, I can get extra pay at work."

The company which Gun-Ho was working for paid more to workers who had certification for welders, electricians, or environmental technicians.

"I could get off at 6 PM. I will have to find a night class. I need this to survive even though I will be really exhausted."

Gun-Ho searched the internet to find a useful certification for him.

"I can easily get a certification for forklift or excavator driving, but there are so many drivers out there already... Learning welding skills or getting environmental technician certification does seem to be a good choice for me. Nah, maybe I should learn injection molding skills or CAD."

He searched the internet for an actual class only to find that there was no class provided at night for those skills.

"Since I registered at a Career Center, I can take free courses sponsored by the government... but they only provide computer web design course or CAD at night. Maybe I should try Seoul even though it is far; they probably have something for me."

Gun-Ho diligently searched the internet while lying in bed.

"Damn, I can't find the right course for me. I can make more if I have a skill certificate."

Gun-Ho fell asleep. He didn't wash his feet and didn't turn off the lights.

Saturday came around. Gun-Ho went fishing with Jong-Suk to the reservoir in Pocheon. It was fall; Cosmos flowers were swaying in the breeze. It was a good season for fishing.

"Bro, you look good today."

"I didn't before?"

"Uh? That Genesis limousine is here again today."

Gun-Ho walked down to the reservoir. The same men, one in his 60s and the other in his 40s, were fishing while listening to the radio. Gun-Ho approached them and said,

"Hello? Did you catch any fish?"

"Oh, the young man with ShinWangJaeWang fate. Come closer. We caught two large fish."

Jong-Suk nudged Gun-Ho and whispered,

"He is not mute."

"Shhh, watch your language. He is a chairman."

"A chairman?"

The man in his 60s gestured for Gun-Ho to come closer to where he was; he was smiling.

"Look. They are big, aren't they?"

He lifted his fishing net; there were two carps that was bigger than the palm of an adult's hand, flapping.

"They are indeed large. Congratulations."

"We had met at the philosophy hall the other day, and we met again today. I guess we are truly meant to meet each other. Is he your friend?"

"Well, he is two years younger than me."

"Is that right? He actually looks younger than you."

Jong-Suk seemed surprised with his unexpected conversation with the man, and he looked at Gun-Ho. Jong-Suk had no clue what was going on when Gun-Ho and the man talked about the philosophy hall and etc.

"Jong-Suk, I met him by accident at the philosophy hall last week."

"We must have known each other in our previous lives. That's why we met again in this life. Come, please have a seat. We ran into each other a few times here; let's get to know one another. I am Chairman Lee."

As he introduced himself as Chairman Lee, he gave his business card to Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk. The other man who looked in his 40s smiled a little today; he had been unfriendly.

"What do you guys do for a living?"

"I work at a plastic factory in Yangju, and this guy is currently preparing for the police exam."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho took a closer look at his business card. It said Chairman of Dongil Paper Corp.

"You are a chairman of a paper production company. I thought you owned several buildings in Cheongdam since that's what Master Park said..."

"Haha. I am a chairman of a paper production company, and also the owner of a few buildings. Oh, let's introduce ourselves to each other. This is Manager Gweon from Dongil Paper."

Chairman Lee introduced the man in his 40s to Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk.

"Hi, I am Gun-Ho Goo."

"Nice to meet you."

"Manager Gweon is a bit curt. He was recently discharged from the military; he was a major. He has a sixth-degree black belt in taekwondo, and he is a very earnest person."

Manager Gweon laughed innocently; his tone of voice was no longer curt.

"My first son actually runs Dongil Paper, and I just go fishing like this. The company is in Ansan. My son is worried about me so he let Manager Gweon stay with me like a bodyguard. Haha."

"And are you friends with the head of that philosophy hall?"

"Are you talking about Master Park? He is my childhood friend. We grew up together in the same town."

"Oh, I see."

"He is a funny man. He was fascinated with religion, and went to church

enthusiastically for a while, then moved to a Buddhist temple to become a monk. He was once a bit into Mediumship as well; he used to practice with a medium. And now, he is a fortune teller."

"I heard he is very good."

"Well, he could be to some people, and he might not be to some other people."

"Huh?"

"Well, since he has a lot of clients, he is probably good. Haha."

Chairman Lee cast his fishing line towards the water vigorously after pulling it.

12 Chapter 12. Chairman Lee, Cheongdam Town Building Owner 2

Chairman Lee let the fishing line sit in the water and relaxed while listening to music. Since he was an old man, Gun-Ho expected him to listen to trot, but surprisingly he was listening to classical music. He was a chairman of a paper production company, and he also owned several buildings in Cheongdam; Gun-Ho wanted to get to know him more. Nah, Gun-Ho wanted to flatter him. However, Chairman Lee didn't give him a chance to talk to him more and focused on fishing; Gun-Ho couldn't initiate a conversation from that point.

"I can't disturb this old man. He is truly enjoying the music and fishing right now."

Gun-Ho stood up from a sitting position.

"Chairman Lee, have a wonderful time. We will leave to the other side for lure fishing."

"Oh ok. You do that."

Chairman Lee smiled with his white teeth.

On the other side of the lake, Gun-Ho was reeling up his slack line.

"Bro, that Chairman Lee person, he is the type of person we can't easily meet. Try to get closer to him."

"What are you talking about?"

"He owns a paper production company. Ask him to get you a job there."

"You can't just get a job like that. You need the right skills for a paper production company."

"Ask him to get you any position. If it was the chairman of the company who put you there, the middle management won't be able to nag or harass you."

"Save it! No one would hire someone who they just met once at a fishing site."

"Keep trying. Where there's a will, there's a way."

"Hey, stop it. Just focus on fishing. Me, I don't want to live like that, just yet."

"You told me some time ago that if someone paid you enough, you would do anything."

Gun-Ho went to work. The director was making a fuss about something.

"Today, we won't be working, but we will do a deep cleaning in our factory. Our collaborating company is visiting us today. Check your workwear and safety boots; make sure you wear your safety helmet. You have to look neat."

"They are coming here, so what? Why should we stop our work?"

The team leader of the injection molding site clapped Gun-Ho on the head and said,

"Hey, do you think they will like the fact that we told them we only use new materials, but in fact, we use some crushed recycled materials?"

The director put up a banner; Gun-Ho was not sure where the director got that banner from.

"The banner says the quality is our priority. That's why we add some recycled materials?"

The foreign worker from India, Ali laughed; Gun-Ho was not sure if Ali understood what Gun-Ho said.

The people from the collaborating company arrived after 11 AM. They were the major supplier taking our products manufactured in this factory. There were three of them; they all looked about the same age as Gun-Ho.

"This machine looks old. What year is it?"

The director told them in a servile attitude with a smile,

"It is old but it is working perfectly; there is no problem at all in producing

goods. Look at this product; it just came out."

"I see some foreign substances on it. Do you, by any chance, use recycled materials? You do have a crusher machine."

"Oh my goodness, we use that crusher machine for another company's products. We rarely use that machine these days."

After making such a fuss, the personnel from the collaboration company finished the actual condition survey. When they were ready to leave, the director asked them,

"Why don't you have lunch with us? It is almost lunchtime. Our town is famous for Korean beef."

They hesitated and looked at their watch.

"Shall we have lunch here then?"

"Alright. Take this car. I will show you the way. Hey, Manager Kim and Assistant Manager Lee, come with me."

After the director and the collaboration company personnel left the site, Mr. Kim from the washing team shouted,

"Well, the alert has been dismissed. Let's have lunch."

Gun-Ho looked back over his life while having lunch at the company cafeteria.

"I am so pathetic."

Gun-Ho felt pathetic about himself; he had no higher education, no special certificate or skills.

"Hey, Gun-Ho, hurry up. We have a lot to do today since we didn't work this morning!"

Gun-Ho hastily finished his lunch, picked up his mask, and ran to the work site. The team leader brought plastic waste using the forklift truck. A mountain of plastic waste appeared in no time; they had to be all crushed out.

"Sh*t. I am so sick of this! I will have to work till late at night again."

Gun-Ho clenched his teeth while working.

"I have to get a skill certificate. I shouldn't go fishing this Sunday. I will visit educational institutes instead. Since I've already decided to get a certificate, I'd better start now."

When Gun-Ho came back home from work, he felt exhausted. He made a phone call to Jong-Suk.

"Jong-Suk, did you decide what certificate you are going to get?"

"I did. I will learn welding skills."

"Welding? That's good. Even without the benefit of the extra point for the police exam, welding skills will be useful."

"I am not sure about that. If I don't become a policeman, I will be working at a factory probably as a team leader with welding skills."

"No no. If you emigrate to Australia or Canada with those welding skills, I heard you can make a lot of money."

"I have no intention to emigrate anywhere. I am the only child in my family. I can't leave my country. If you like it, you go ahead. What about you? Did you decide?"

"No, I am still working on it."

"What's taking you so long? Just pick anything. Are you thinking about taking the realtor or labor officer exam?"

"A labor officer? Maybe in my next life."

"Try it. Do you remember my private tutor in Bucheon? He told me that he was studying for the appraiser exam."

"An appraiser? For gems? A gemologist?"

"No, not that kind of appraiser. It's valuation appraiser."

"Anyway, I am visiting several educational institutes this Sunday. I won't be able to go fishing. Let's do it next Sunday."

"No problem. I have to go to see my uncle at a hospital this Sunday anyway."

Two weeks later, Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk met at the fishing site in Pocheon.

"I love this place. I think I can smell the freshwater fish, don't you think?"

"I don't see Chairman Lee today."

"You are more interested in seeing Chairman Lee who has buildings in Cheongdam and a paper production company, than fishing. You are trying to get closer to him."

"F*ck man! What am I gonna do with an old person?"

"Doing what? I've research Dongil paper Corp. It is a KOSDAQ registered firm."

"Is it?"

"Bro, the factory you are working for is Dongil Tech, right? They have the same name. That's weird."

"You are right. That's odd."

"Get involved with him."

"You said it is a KOSDAQ registered company. Then they can conduct an open recruitment. Having a chance to listen to his life story is good enough for me. Getting involved what? He won't get involved with me."

"Uh? The Genesis limousine is coming in."

"So what? Let's focus on our fishing."

Chairman Lee got off the car and walked down to the lake. Manager Gweon followed him while carrying some bags.

"The two young men came here before us today."

"Hello!"

"Did you catch any?"

"We just got here."

"I didn't see you last week. Did you go somewhere else?"

"Yes, I was trying to find a way to get a skill certificate."

"A skill certificate?"

"Yes, I am thinking of getting an environmental technician certificate or an electrician certificate."

Chairman Lee stared at Gun-Ho once he heard about his idea to get a certificate, and then shook his head side to side quietly. Gun-Ho thought Chairman Lee was thinking that getting those certificates would be very difficult for a guy like Gun-Ho.

"I know it won't be easy, but I want to try doggedly."

"It is nice to have a skill certificate, but why don't you try something else?"

Chairman Lee started talking to Gun-Ho in an informal way. Gun-Ho felt more comfortable.

"I can't think of anything else."

"It's not that."

Chairman Lee shook his head again side to side.

"Your fate is ShinWangJaeWang. Do you still remember what Master Park from the Gangnam philosophy hall told you?"

"ShinWangJaeWang? What does it mean?"

"A person who is receiving a lot of fortune should have a body and energy with Wang; that way he can handle the fortune. In reading someone's fate, ShinWangJaeWang is interpreted as fate becoming extremely wealthy. Since you

have ShinWangJaeWang fate, I recommend you to learn Boogi."

"Boogi? What is Boogi?"

"Hmmm, we don't use the word Boogi any longer? Probably you can say it is basic accounting. Boogi means keeping a ledger."

"Oh, Chairman Lee, how can I possibly handle accountancy? I didn't even go to a commercial college."

Chairman Lee shook his head again side to side.

"Anyone who received at least an elementary education can learn Boogi. The founder of Samsung, Byung-Chul Lee and the founder of Hyundai Group, Joo-Young Jung, they all learned Boogi when they were young. Didn't you know that?"

13 Chapter 13. Chairman Lee, Cheongdam Town Building Owner 3

While Chairman Lee continued talking, Manager Gweon stood up, poured water into a paper cup, and handed it to Chairman Lee.

"Oh, young men, I think I was told your names, or not."

"I am Gun-Ho Goo."

"My name is Jong-Suk Park."

"Boogi is part of accountancy; there was a word for it..."

"Is it computerized accounting? When I went to the technical training institute the government had sponsored, I saw the course name, Computerized Accounting Level 2."

Jong-Suk said, "That's right; that's it, computerized accounting. Gun-Ho, you should learn that."

Chairman Lee said slapping his lap, "I heard about computerized accounting. Usually, females study it, hoping to get a job in bookkeeping, don't they? I am not good with numbers. I am not even good at math."

"You don't have to be good at math as long as you know how to do addition and subtraction. You don't have to be an expert, but you will have to understand accounting systems and know how to read financial statements. Those are essential skills you need to know in order to run a big company and be wealthy."

"Ehi, thank you for saying that, but how can a man like me possibly run a big company? I was born poor. I barely make ends meet. I understand Samsung chairman Byung-Chul, Lee, and Hyundai Group chairman Joo-Young Jung studied accounting when they were young, but that was a long time ago. I will use your advice to cheer me up though."

"That's not it." Chairman Lee shook his head again from side to side.

"ShinWangJaeWang fate! I want to see how you, who was born poor, develop your life with your ShinWangJaeWang fate."

"To be honest with you, my parents are living in an apartment barely paying their monthly rent. I didn't go to a decent college, and I have no special skills or certificates I can show off. All I have is good physical health, so I work at a factory with a monthly salary of 1,800,000 won. Master Park from Gangnam philosophy hall and Chairman Lee seem to give young people false hope."

"That's not true." Chairman Lee again shook his head "We will be fishing on the other side of the lake. Since we do lure fishing, we don't want to disturb you and Manager Gweon's bait fishing here."

"Mr. Goo! People say a person born to a poor family cannot rise to the top anymore even though it happened in the past. They say we are living in an era where the economic ladder to climb up is broken for them, but I am intrigued by you and your fate, and I want to see how your life unfolds. Haha."

"You have a fantastic day, Chairman Lee. We will be on the other side of the lake."

"I hope you catch a bass the size of a forearm."

"You too, Chairman Lee. I hope you catch a carp the size of a forearm."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk came to the other side of the lake. Jong-Suk clapped Gun-Ho on the waist.

"Bro, bro! Take a computerized accounting course. Who knows? Chairman Lee might get you a job at Dongil Paper with the skills."

"Don't count your chickens before they hatch."

"That's probably why Chairman Lee took his own time in convincing you to take the course. Try it. You can take the computerized accounting level-2 course for free; it's sponsored by the government. This is your opportunity. Get the level-2 computerized accounting, and then level-1 computerized accounting and while you are at it, get the accountant license too. Why not?"

"BS!"

"They said you have an amazing fate. Try it!"

"You retard! The accountant license exam is very difficult to pass even for people who graduated from the top commercial college. There are plenty of people who keep failing the exam for several years. Does a factory worker try the same exam? I feel extremely exhausted after work, aching all over my body. Are you asking me to study after work? The very idea is enough to make a cat laugh."

"Then try computerized accounting level-2. Maybe Chairman Lee is planning to put you at one of Dongil Paper's subsidiaries."

"Get real!"

"Chairman Lee is interested in you because of your fate, being a rich man. Why not play along? I would."

"Long time ago, one of my aunts went to a fortune teller to hear that her son would become a judge or a prosecutor, and her daughter would be a president of a university. Do you have any idea what they are doing now?"

"What are they doing?"

"The son is unemployed. The daughter teaches something at a community center and she is making less than 1,000,000 won per month."

"Really? Your aunt went to a fake fortune teller; that's why. You learned about your fate from a famous fortune teller from Gangnam."

"You are pathetic. You believe that?"

"You traveled all the way to Gangnam to consult the fortune teller because you believe it, didn't you?"

"Let's do fishing."

After Gun-Ho came back home, he started thinking harder.

"Which certificate exam should I prepare for?"

Gun-Ho couldn't decide between forklift driving and environmental technician skills. Now computerized accounting level-2 was added on the table.

"Should I study computerized accounting level-2? Does Chairman Lee really intend to get me a job somewhere? Nah. That's not possible because most companies hire females for bookkeeping positions."

All of the bookkeepers who Gun-Ho knows from the companies he had worked before were female. Even all of the client companies had only female bookkeepers. Of course, big companies hired male workers with a commercial college degree for bookkeeping jobs and for positions at a funding department.

"If I learn skills for forklift driving or welding, I can use the skills right away at the factory I am working for right now, but I am not sure about computerized accounting; it's uncertain if I can get a job with the skills."

Gun-Ho had given a lot of thought to it but still couldn't decide. Gun-Ho received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro? Did you decide?"

"Not yet..."

"You haven't yet? The learning card you have from the Career Center expires after a year. You have to take classes within a year if you want to learn for free!"

"Did you decide?"

"Decide? It has been a few days already since I started a welding skills course. With this welding certificate, if I don't pass the police exam, I think I will try to go to Australia with a Working Holiday visa."

Gun-Ho finally decided to learn forklift driving skills he could use at the factory right away. Team leaders at a factory should know how to drive a forklift truck and know welding skills.

It took around 2 weeks to complete forklift driving training if one had a Class 1 driver's license. The education center issued certificates, so it was convenient.

Also, the course was free.

"Is it a heavy equipment education center? Do you provide a course at night for forklift or excavator driving?"

"Of course. We do have night courses. Since it starts on the 15th, you should register now. Do you have a Class 1 driver's license?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then come quick. Once this course is closed, there will be no more night course this month."

"Where should I go?"

"We are located in Baekseok Town. I will text you the address. You will be able to find it using GPS navigator."

"Will someone be there at night for registration?"

"Of course. You should hurry."

Gun-Ho felt better thinking about learning forklift driving. He actually knew how to drive a forklift, but there was a huge difference between having a license and having none.

"Team leader Kim, Team leader Park, you jerks! You didn't even let me touch the forklift. I will have a license soon. F*ckers!"

Gun-Ho picked up a free newspaper with a classified section on the way back home from a convenience store after buying cigarettes.

"There are several openings for workers who can drive a forklift. Once I get the certificate, maybe I should get one of these jobs; I don't have to suffer at this factory. What? Bookkeeping position? Males are welcome?"

Gun-Ho gazed at the job advertisement.

"They do hire men for bookkeeping..."

Gun-Ho was immersed in thought with his arms folded.

14 Chapter 14. Chairman Lee, Cheongdam Town Building Owner 4

Won-Chul, Gun-Ho's high school classmate, sent him the wedding invitation through KaTalk. Gun-Ho received a call about it last time; this time, Won-Chul sent the official wedding invitation.

"Oh, that's right. Won-Chul is getting married this Saturday!" Gun-Ho zoomed in on the wedding invitation. "Their wedding will take place at a hotel in Gangnam. I can't even read or remember the name of the hotel and the wedding venue. They are long and in a foreign language. Sh*t."

Won-Chul included a photo of himself in a tuxedo as the groom and his bride wearing a veil. They were smiling in the photo; they looked glamorous and classy.

"Whew –"

Gun-Ho knew he should be happy for Won-Chul, but he couldn't help but sigh. There was one more photo; it was a photo of the groom and the bride in a traditional Korean outfit. They were facing each other in the photo. The bride looked so pretty, maybe because of her heavy makeup and her glamorous hair.

"Since his parents are wealthy, they probably bought a small condo for Won-Chul as a wedding gift. Ha. What about me? I am already over 30 and I've never dated a girl before. I am truly a 5-GivingUp."

5-GivingUp referred to a person like Gun-Ho; a person who gave up 5 things: having a romantic relationship, getting married, having a child, having a social life, and owning a house. If 2 more things were added to the list, then it was called 7-GivingUp, which were a dream and hope.

"Will I have a dream and hope if I get a skills certificate?"

Gun-Ho and Won-Chul were not close in high school. They belonged to different social groups. Won-Chul was ranked first or second in his class in high school.

He also had a strong physique, and Gun-Ho didn't even try to challenge him at that time.

During his college years, Gun-Ho came to his hometown, Incheon, to spend his summer and winter break with his parents. His college was far from Incheon in the countryside. One day, when Gun-Ho worked part-time at a 24/7 convenience store, Won-Chul walked in the store to buy something. Won-Chul was a Y University student in Seoul. He was with a pretty girl. Gun-Ho didn't acknowledge him, neither did Won-Chul even after he saw Gun-Ho standing behind the counter.

"Despite how things were between us, he sent me his wedding invitation; he must have changed over the years."

One of the ceiling lights in his room started flickering.

"The fluorescent bulb blinked out."

Gun-Ho stood on a chair and removed one of the ceiling lights. Once he removed one of the two lights, the room became dim. That made Gun-Ho feel more depressed, and he started drinking soju. He then felt a longing for a woman, and for the first time in a long time, he masturbated before heading to bed.

Saturday came around. It was Won-Chul's wedding day. Gun-Ho was getting ready for the wedding, wearing a suit with a tie.

"Gosh, it has been years since I wore a tie."

Clothes make the man. Once Gun-Ho wore a suit instead of a factory uniform, he looked fabulous. He took the subway from Yangju station to Gangnam Sinsa station to get to the wedding venue; it was a boring and fatiguing trip.

"A lot of people came."

Won-Chul was greeting and thanking each and every one of the guests for coming to his wedding. He was wearing a gold metal frame glasses; he looked smart. His mom was standing next to him; she looked young.

"How old is she? She looks at least 10 years younger than my mom who is

working as a caregiver in a nursing home."

A lot of congratulatory flower wreaths formed a line: one from the president of L group Won-Chul was working for, one from a director of a big company Won-Chul's dad was working for, and one from the president of Pharmacist Association since his mom was a member of the association. On top of that, there were many flower wreaths from CEOs of pharmaceutical companies, congressmen, etc.; probably more than 30 wreaths were there.

"Sh*t. At my wedding, I will probably get one congratulatory flower wreath from the owner of the plastic factory in Gyeongsin Town in Yangju. Even my wedding will look shabby with one flower wreath."

Gun-Ho went closer to Won-Chul.

"Won-Chul Jo. Congratulations."

"Oh, Gun-Ho. Thank you."

Gun-Ho signed the guest book and dropped off 100,000 won as wedding gift money, his precious money he worked his socks off for. After the wedding, it was time for picture-taking with relatives and friends. Gun-Ho posed for the photo with a few friends from high school, who he met at the wedding. Most of Won-Chul's other friends are from his college or work. Gun-Ho felt as if they were thinking like 'did Won-Chul had a friend like him?' while looking at Gun-Ho.

"All friends of the bride looked sophisticated. Are they from the same pharmaceutical college as the bride?"

Gun-Ho thought he wouldn't be able to find anyone for him among those women.

"A factory working man should meet a factory working woman."

Gun-Ho smiled cynically and walked down to the banquet hall. After the wedding, Gun-Ho took the subway heading to Yangju station. Since it was Saturday, a lot of people were on the subway, especially old people. He couldn't get a seat. He was so tired when he got home; he drank soju again.

A week passed like an arrow and Gun-Ho was back to work. He had a hard time sleeping at night maybe because he had drunk too much soju lately; he had a headache. He slept around 2 AM and got up late.

"Uh? Oh God, I'm late for work. The team leader will be bitching."

It was probably not a lucky day for Gun-Ho. He walked to the place where he parked to find a grey Santa Fe parked in front of his car, blocking his way out. He was already late for work.

"F*ck, who the hell!"

Gun-Ho tried to push the car to make a space so he could drive out; it didn't move at all. Fortunately, he found a memo on the windshield with a phone number. The phone kept ringing; whoever left the memo didn't pick up the phone. Gun-Ho spent the next 30 minutes stamping his foot impatiently. He called the number again.

"Are you calling because of the car? I'm on my way."

A middle-aged woman came running from the building across the OneRoom where Gun-Ho was living in.

"Haha. I am so sorry."

She didn't seem to mean it. She seemed to have a lot of nerve.

As soon as the woman drove her car away, Gun-Ho frantically drove to work. When he arrived at work, many people were standing on the site; not just team leaders but an environmental technician who usually worked in the office was there too. There was the 26-ton tank lorry truck that belonged to the environmental company.

"Oh, today is wastewater pickup day!"

The vacuum tanker started sucking the water waste from its storage tank, and it created a loud noise. Raw materials came in as well this busy day; the forklift truck was moving back and forth creating another loud noise. Team leader Kim saw Gun-Ho just arriving.

"Hello, Sir. Did you just come into work?"

Team leader Kim gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho as he did to his superiors.

"Wahahaha."

Watching the team leader Kim teasing Gun-Ho, all those people standing at the site, including the environmental technician and the forklift driver, laughed along. Gun-Ho blushed with embarrassment. Team leader Kim was a jerk; the environment technician and the forklift driver were no different.

"Fucking job! I have no will to keep on going here!"

Gun-Ho changed to his uniform; he found a job opening flyers in his pocket, which he had collected.

"Opening for an environmental technician, a promising job."

Gun-Ho tore the flyer. There was another one.

"Getting your forklift license in no time."

Gun-Ho tore that flyer too.

"Welding course big discount!"

He tore the flyer into pieces. Feeling upset, he thought he was hearing Chairman Lee's voice, whom he met at the fishing site.

"Learn Boogi. The founder of Samsung, Byung-Chul Lee and the founder of Hyundai Group, Joo-Young Jung, they all learned Boogi when they were young."

15 Chapter 15. Gun-Ho Goo Started Studying Accounting 1

Gun-Ho changed his mind.

"Right. What am I gonna do with the skills certificate? I will have a pay increase about 200,000 or 300,000 won with the environmental technician or welder certificate. I will still work at a factory. Fuck! Why not have an adventure myself? Whatever it is I choose to do, my life won't get any worse."

Finally, Gun-Ho decided to study computerized accounting; it was a firm decision. Gun-Ho had a fear of failure, of course, because he knew he was not good with numbers.

"I used to get a zero on my math exam in school. That's why I chose a college of liberal arts over a college of natural science even though it was a low ranked college in the countryside. Also, I had strived for a passing grade in the civil service exam to become a level-9 government employee because I didn't have to take a math exam for it. I have been trying to avoid math all my life, and I am wondering if I can handle computerized accounting."

Still worrying about it, Gun-Ho made a call to a vocational school that offered computerized accounting courses. The school was located in Uijeongbu City; Gun-Ho couldn't find any vocational school with the course in Yangju.

"Is it a vocational school? Do you provide a level-2 computerized accounting course at night?"

"Are you currently working?"

"Yes, I am."

"We have two types of programs for students who are currently working: evening program and weekend program. The weekend program is already closed, and the evening program is still open."

"What time does the evening class start?"

"From 7 to 10 PM."

"Is it part of government-sponsored program?"

"Yes, if you have the Tomorrow Learning Card, you can take the class."

"Do you accept male students?"

"Haha, who cares whether you are male or female? Anyone can take the class."

"Is there any qualification requirement?"

"No there isn't. It doesn't matter whether you are a junior high school graduate or college graduate."

"Ok then. I will come and visit the school soon."

Gun-Ho checked the distance from home to the school. It was over 40 km round-trip; it was tight but it was still doable if Gun-Ho made some effort into it.

"I will have to spend extra on gas, but why don't I give it a try?"

Gun-Ho got off his work at 5:30 in the afternoon. He was supposed to get off at 5, but with two 15-minute breaks in the morning and afternoon, he had to add 30 minutes. Production workers couldn't go on without 15-minute breaks because of high physical work intensity. Companies varied in how they gave breaks during work hours, but usually, they gave a 15-minute break after two hours of intense work from 8 to 10 AM.

During work hours, workers were not even supposed to go pee because they all have to work simultaneously. When one was finished, it passed on to the next, so if one person stopped working to go to pee, then the next person had to stop his work as well until the first person returned. They picked up the work at 10:15 after the first break and at noon, the morning work ended. The afternoon work started at 1. They took a 15-minute break at 3; during this time, they went to the bathroom and ate some snacks like bread and milk. After the break, they worked intensely until 5:30.

"So I get off at 5:30. I then wash my hands, change my clothes, clean up a little, and return to my room at OneRoom. It's 6:30 then. It will take about 30 minutes to drive to the vocational school, so I can get to the class on time. I won't have time for dinner though. I will be hungry."

Gun-Ho registered for the class in the vocational school. There were about 20 students, all females except 3. Gun-Ho was worried he would be the only male in the class. He felt relieved when he saw 2 other men.

"Since today is our first day of class, I will talk about basic accounting principles and fundamental accounting concepts."

A female instructor started explaining; she looked about the same age as Gun-Ho. The class was somewhat interesting. On the second day, the instructor talked about the accounting cycle; Gun-Ho didn't fully understand. When she talked about financial statements, and profit and loss statements, Gun-Ho found it difficult to understand not only the terminology but the concept too.

"You all understood the concept of a fixed asset, current asset, fixed liability, and current liability, right?"

"Not so sure."

"Those who are not sure, please go home and read the handouts one more time."

Gun-Ho had a hard time understanding the concept even after reading the handouts several times."

"Gosh, maybe I shouldn't be here."

Gun-Ho doubted whether he had the aptitude for accounting. He didn't even start the practical training, but he was already lost in doing accounting with account titles. He had no idea what debt or credit meant. They would start Recording and Retrieving Business Transaction next week, and maybe he should give up now.

Jong-Suk started giggling while talking with Gun-Ho on the phone.

"You started to learn accounting? You used to study for the level-9 government employee civil service exam. Is it doable?"

"I gave some thought to it. I don't think I have the right aptitude for accounting."

Jong-Suk giggled again. "Accounting is not for everyone. Even the commercial college graduates found it difficult."

"But the women seem good at it. I don't think they graduated from a commercial college."

"I guess doing accounting involves meticulous record-keeping. Maybe that's why women tend to have an aptitude for it."

"What about you? How are you doing with learning welding skills?"

"Yeah, I am having fun. Now, I can do gas welding and arc welding."

"Good for you."

"Bro, you sound a little down. What's going on? What did you do yesterday? Did you go there?"

"Go where? I was racking my brains all day."

"Let's go fishing and get some fresh air. It has been a while."

"Okay. Let's go."

"Damn. You sound really down, and now I'm feeling down too."

"Sorry man."

Cosmos flowers at the fishing site were falling down. It was chilly and windy.

"The season is changing. It's cold already."

"Uh? Cheongdam Chairman Lee is already here."

"The man is so into fishing too."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk walked down the lake, carrying their fishing gears and bags.

"You are already here. How have you been?"

"Oh, Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk. It has been a while. How come you don't come here often anymore? I didn't see you last week."

"Yes, we have been busy lately. We are going to vocational schools."

"Vocational school? Good for you. What are you learning?"

"I am taking the level-2 computerized accounting, and Jong-Suk is taking welding skills class."

"Computerized accounting? Oh, I see. You made the right decision. How's the class? Do you like it?"

"No, not really. I have no idea what they are talking about, and I don't think I have the right aptitude for it."

"Haha. Is that so? Jong-Suk, what about you? How is the welding class?"

"Yes, it's fun. Now I can do most types of welding."

"Haha. That's good for you. Gun-Ho, which part of computerized accounting do you find difficult?"

"The terminology used in Balance Sheet is new to me and it's very difficult. During the hands-on practice training, journal entries were confusing as well."

"Balance sheet is difficult... Do you know who created it?"

"Huh? The person who created it? Probably a famous scholar did a long time ago."

"No."

Chairman Lee shook his head.

"Neither a prominent scholar nor Ph.Ds from SKY commercial colleges."

"Then who was it?"

"The balance sheet was created by people from a low class, the slaves."

"What? Slaves? That's unbelievable!"

16 Chapter 16. Gun-Ho Goo Started Studying Accounting 2

Looking at the reflection of the fishing rod on the water surface, Chairman Lee said, "Balance sheet was created by slaves during the Roman Empire."

"Is that right?"

"The warriors going to the Crusades needed someone who could take care of their significant number of trophies at home. In other words, they needed someone who could manage their properties. So they picked a smart slave to do the job."

"Oh, I see."

"The warriors had to go to war every now and then. Once they returned home after the war had ended, their properties had either grown or reduced. If they saw more properties, they were good, but if they saw less of them, what would have happened?"

"They would have scolded the slave."

"No. Slaves were not treated as human beings. The warrior actually cut the slave's throat with his sword, accusing him of mismanaging their properties."

"But his throat..."

"That was why the slaves came up with the balance sheet, so they would not get killed. The slave grappled to find how he could lay out all activities related to the properties in a sheet so his master could know at a glance what had actually happened to the properties. He recorded debits and credits in a separate column in the same sheet, so it was easy to understand the current state of the properties and relevant activities. By doing this, the slave could save his life. "

"I see..."

"The terminology, Chabyun (debit) and Daebyun (credit) have been made by Japanese. They just meant one is recorded on the left side and the other is on the right side; that way you can understand easily. Because they are recorded on both sides: left and right, we call it double-entry bookkeeping."

"That is the double entry bookkeeping."

Chairman Lee retrieved the fishing rod, attached bait to the hook, and then cast the fishing rod into the water.

"We had a double-entry bookkeeping in Korea."

"Really? In our country?"

"That's right. Our Gaesung City merchants used the same system."

"Those merchants who were famous for ginseng?"

"Yes. We recently discovered the ledgers used by the Gaesung merchants and their business transactions were recorded under the double-entry accounting system."

"I see... But debits and credits, they are so difficult and confusing."

"When there is a business transaction, a business document such as a receipt, invoice, voucher, among others is generated. You know that, right?"

"Yes, I do."

"When a business transaction is to be recorded in the book, you have to analyze the transaction to understand whether it is debited or credited."

"Right. I learned that."

"That is called Journalizing."

"That's right."

"What you are learning from the vocational school is how to enter the business documents data into the computer program."

"Yes, if I don't distinguish between debits and credits, the wrong result will be printed out."

"Keep it up. You don't have to know every detail in using the accounting computer program like a bookkeeper, but you should know the big picture."

"What do you mean?"

"You can let accountants or bookkeepers do the work in detail, you just need to take a look at the big picture. You have ShinWangJaeWang fate, and you will be running a company."

At that moment, Jong-Suk shouted, "The fishing float is moving! A big fish took the bait!"

Chairman Lee pulled in the fish. It was not big but a palm-sized silver carp flapping.

"Wow. This one is something. I thought it was a really, really big fish."

Chairman Lee, with a joyful face, removed the hook from the mouth of the fish and placed the fish in the fishing net.

Chairman Lee attached new bait and cast into the water again. He didn't say a word, but he kept looking at the fishing float on the water surface. There was a long pause. When Gun-Ho was standing up from a seated position to go to his spot for fishing, Chairman Lee started talking.

"It's hard to understand a balance sheet... Let me tell you an interesting story."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk listened intently to what he would tell.

"Let's say Gun-Ho wants to open a fishing store because he likes fishing. He found a good location for it, and they are asking 2,000,000 won for a monthly rent with a 30,000,000 won deposit. The inventory cost him 20,000,000 won for fishing rods and other fishing gears. Decorating the interior cost him another 10,000,000 won. Then how much does Gun-Ho need to start?"

"I will need 60,000,000 won."

"That's right. You need to invest 60,000,000 won, but, say, Gun-Ho has only 35,000,000 won saved up so far. Then he has to loan the remaining 25,000,000 won, right?"

"Yes, probably so."

"Here, 35,000,000 is the capital. The debt is 25,000,000."

"Right."

"The investment cost for the store is 60,000,000 won; this 60,000,000 won is the assets I can control and manage. Namely, the investment cost plus the debt becomes my assets."

"So far I think I understand."

"Then if the debts increase, do the assets increase or decrease?"

"The assets increase."

"In other words, as the debts increase, the assets increase as well; if the debts decrease then the assets decrease. If you approach the accounting this way, you will understand it easily."

"Yes... It seems so."

"Ask your friends whether the increase of debt is the decrease of assets or increase of assets. Surprisingly, many people don't know."

"I see..."

"One more thing. You know the difference between the ordinary income and the net income, don't you?"

"That..."

"Ask the team leader or manager at your factory about the difference between the ordinary income and the net income. Most people don't know. Keep up the good work."

"Thank you, Sir. We will go to the other side of the lake for fishing."

Chairman Lee said one more thing for the last time before Gun-Ho left, "You don't have to look at the details in studying accounting. Don't look at the trees; look at the forest. You just need to know the big picture."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk came to the other side of the reservoir and cast the lure fishing rods into the water. Reeling up his slack-line, Jong-Suk asked, "Bro, what is ordinary income, and what is net income?"

"I recently learned those from the vocational school. Ordinary income is a company's profit after deducting interest cost and interest income from operating income.

"What about net income?"

"Net income is a company's earnings remaining after factoring in taxes."

"You know a lot. I don't know about the stuff, but you sound different now."

"What are you talking about? I am just Gun-Ho Goo."

"No, I smell a bookkeeper from you."

"Silly. What smell? I didn't even finish the training. I don't even have the level-2 computerized accounting certificate yet."

"No, I can smell it. You will pass the exam in no time."

"What if I do? Let's say I get the certificate, then what? Companies hire female bookkeepers. I won't have a chance to get a position."

"Who knows? Maybe Chairman Lee from across the lake will find something for you."

"You say that again! I actually saw a job opening for a male bookkeeper from the classified section in a newspaper..."

"Really? Apply for the position."

"Man! I don't have the certificate yet."

"Oh, that's right. Let's keep fishing!"

17 Chapter 17. Getting A Job In Bookkeeping 1

Gun-Ho's parents are living in Juan Town, Incheon. Gun-Ho used to work in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province and then Pocheon, and now he is working in Yangju.

'I even gave up the level-9 civil service exam; I don't care where I live.'

Thinking like this, Gun-Ho has adapted to any place he had to live. The life as a factory worker estranged Gun-Ho from his friends and made him close with only Jong-Suk who was also working at a factory.

"Jong-Suk, did you get the welders certificate?"

"Uh, bro! I took the exam. The results were not released yet, but I think I passed it."

"That certificate is for a welder or a welding technician?"

"Welders. While welders usually do shielded metal arc welding, special welders do TIG welding."

"That's how they are divided? I have no idea. Good luck with it."

"What about you, bro? Did you take the level-2 computerized accounting exam?"

"I finished the course. I am now preparing for the exam. I don't think I can pass the level-1 exam, but I think I can easily pass level-2."

"Bro, you didn't go fishing lately, did you?"

"I haven't had time for it."

"I won't go fishing either since it had been cold, but I went fishing last week for nothing."

"Why? Were there no blind fishes?"

"The fishes were not biting. Also, I didn't see Chairman Lee there. He probably didn't come because of the cold weather."

"Yeah, probably so. Cold weather affects the elderly."

"That old man seemed to like you a lot. He said you had the fate of being a rich man."

"He probably said so to make me feel better. Stay warm during the winter, and I will see you next spring after we both pass the exam."

"Sounds good! Once the weather becomes warmer, let's go fishing and drink soju together."

Gun-Ho studied really hard that winter. Even though he was exhausted after work, he studied strenuously until late night every day striving to pass the level-2 computerized accounting exam.

"I think I now see the overall picture."

Gun-Ho had a vague idea about the accounting system. He started reading books related to accounting because they interested him. His knowledge of accounting rapidly progressed.

"This is what the accounting cycle is. Once I know it, it makes sense."

Gun-Ho dreamed about having his own business, keeping his account book and move forward.

The Small and Big Winter went by, and the Lunar New Year's Day and the first full moon followed. In Early March, Gun-Ho received the news that Jong-Suk passed the welder exam.

"Bro! I passed the exam!"

"Really? I am happy for you. Congratulations. Let's celebrate over a drink; you buy it. Will you start preparing for the police exam then?"

"It will be nice to be a policeman, but I want to work in a place like a shipyard. The pay for a policeman or level-9 government employee is not good even though they come with good retirement benefits."

"Government job is good... Can you get a job in production for a big company?"

"It's hard to get a job in a big company, and you need luck as well. I am a preferred job candidate since I already served in the military and I am less than 30 years old, but there are a lot of candidates out there with the same qualification."

"Is that so?"

"Bro, when is your level-2 computerized accounting exam?"

"I have to apply for the exam by March 9th, and the exam date is April 9th."

"You only have a few weeks left. You will have to take a day off on the exam date."

"No, I don't have to. It's on a Saturday."

"That's nice. Since you are interested in accounting and you think you have an aptitude for it, I'm sure you will pass the exam."

"Thank you."

That year, in April, Gun-Ho found out that he passed the exam. Once he passed it, he wanted to work in accounting right away. He didn't have any work experience in the field and he was worried about that, but if there was a job opening for a male bookkeeper, he wanted to go for it. While he was going through the classified section in a newspaper, he saw a job advertisement.

"Hiring a bookkeeper. No experience necessary. Driver's license preferred"

If work experience was not required, this must be an assistant position, and there must be someone working already. The advertisement didn't mention anything about female gender requirement. Gun-Ho made a call to the number.

"Hello? Is it AH Tech? I just saw a job opening advertisement for a bookkeeper

position."

"Yes, that's right."

"Can a man apply for the position?"

"Yes."

"Do I need to visit the site to apply?"

"You can send your resume through fax."

"Ok. Thank you."

Gun-Ho's heart started beating. He was going to send the resume right away.

"I can't use the fax machine at the office, someone might think it strange. Let's do it outside."

Gun-Ho planned to fax it during lunchtime. Without having lunch, Gun-Ho went to the stationary store close to the Township Office and faxed his resume to the company.

"It is good that this company is not far from here; I don't have to move again."

Gun-Ho felt excited about the possibility of working in an office and not in a factory anymore. That thought made him enjoy even the factory work.

"Hey, Gun-Ho. Something fun?" The quiet team leader in the crushing site asked.

"No, nothing."

"You look happy. You got a girlfriend?"

"No. I don't have a girlfriend."

"I've seen several pretty girls working in the factory next to ours. Go for it."

"I haven't seen any."

"There is a very pretty girl from Vietnam."

"You seemed to be interested in her."

"I am not interested in any at all. It is already hard to live with one woman, my wife."

A few days later, the AH Tech Gun-Ho applied for a bookkeeper position sent a text to him to invite him for an interview.

"I have to miss the work... Let's tell them I am sick."

In a small factory like this one, if someone missed work, the others had to work more. Gun-Ho felt sorry for his colleagues, but he had no choice. Gun-Ho started acting.

"I can't work any longer today. I am not feeling well. I think it has to do with something I ate yesterday."

"What? You were perfectly fine this morning! You drank yesterday, didn't you?"

"No, I didn't. I don't know what is wrong with me. Wekwek."

Gun-Ho pretended he was throwing up. That caused the team leader to raise his eyebrows.

"Go see a doctor."

Gun-Ho moaned. "I feel like passing out."

"Go to the company dormitory for foreign workers, and lie down there for a while."

"My stomach aches."

"It hurts? Go see a doctor quickly."

Gun-Ho walked out of the factory telling them he was heading to a hospital."

"Yippee. I made it. Today will be a hard day for the team leader; he will have to do the work I was supposed to do."

The company Gun-Ho was having an interview for was a bit bigger than his current factory. He was not sure about the nature of their business but he could smell some chemicals; they were probably manufacturing pharmaceutical related products.

"I came here for an interview."

"Please have a seat and wait in the conference room over there."

In the conference room, there were four other candidates waiting. They were all female. As Gun-Ho entered the room, they glanced at him then focused on their smartphones. After a while, a man in his early 50s and a woman in her 40s came into the room, holding a file.

"Thank you all for coming today. I am a director of AH Tech. The lady next to me is a manager."

"Nice to meet you."

All candidates simultaneously bowed in a half standing position.

18 Chapter 18. Getting A Job In Bookkeeping 2

The interviewer, looking through the application files said, "After I reviewed your applications, I had to invite you all for an interview to meet with you in person; your applications stood out to us. As you already have noticed, this area is hard to reach via public transit. So we expected an employee to have his or her own car. Do you all have a car?"

"Yes." Gun-Ho answered vigorously.

Other female candidates answered the same. The job advertisement clearly said the company preferred someone with a car; so only the people with a car would have applied for the job. The director asked, looking at the file.

"Ms. Mi-Young Oh, you have quite a lot of work experience in the field. Do you have the level-1 computerized accounting certificate?"

"Yes, I do."

Gun-Ho looked at the lady, Mi-Young Oh, who was wearing glasses.

"Eek, I might not get this job. I only have the level-2 certificate. She has the level-1 in addition to work experience."

Gun-Ho was on pins and needles.

"Ms. Yoo-Mi Shin, you have the level-1 computerized accounting certificate, level-1 computer Word Processor, and ITQ Excel certificate. Oh, you all know how to use Excel, right?"

Everyone said yes except Gun-Ho; he hesitated. Closing his file, the director looked at Gun-Ho.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? You are the only male here... You have work experience in a factory. Are you good at Excel?"

Gun-Ho added his work experience in the factories to his resume, but he didn't clearly write that the experience was from the work in a production line. The director seemed to understand Gun-Ho's work experience as an experience in an office in a factory. Gun-Ho didn't know how to do Excel; he was sweating.

"I will learn."

As Gun-Ho said so, everyone in the room looked at him strangely. The director said with a smile.

"As you all know, a bookkeeper should know well how to work with Excel. Our company uses Douzone accounting program. Sometimes, we store backup data in Excel."

Out of the four applicants, two had the level-1 certificate, and everyone except Gun-Ho knew well how to work with Excel. Gun-Ho felt embarrassed. He thought having the level-2 certificate was enough to apply for this type of job, but it wasn't.

"The bookkeeper lady in Dongil Tech where I work for right now doesn't have any certificate. I am so surprised there are so many people with the level-1 certificate."

Gun-Ho wanted to leave the interviewing site. He didn't remember how the rest of the interview process went.

"I was a big frog in a small pond!"

After the interview, driving out of the interviewing site, Gun-Ho felt shocked.

"The ladies are younger than me, but they have the level-1 computerized accounting certificate, and good at Word Processor, Excel, and PowerPoint. My life has been a waste."

Gun-Ho wanted to cry. He felt like his current job as a factory worker in his current factory was meant for him and his true vocation. When he returned to the factory, the team leader gave him a bright smile.

"Did you go to see a doctor? What did they say?"

"I feel better after getting an injection and a pill. They said I would be okay after some rest."

"Then why did you come back to work? You should have gone home and taken a rest."

"I'm okay."

"Man, okay. Good. The truck just came in. Let's go and help them with the loading."

A few days later, Gun-Ho received a text message from the AH Tech where he applied for a bookkeeper position.

"We are sorry to inform you that you have not been selected for the bookkeeping position this time. We hope to have an opportunity to work with you next time. We appreciate your interest."

"They don't have to show me this type of kindness."

Gun-Ho deleted the text message right away.

"For a bookkeeping position, Excel is a must. I applied for the position without knowing it... Of course, those people at the interviewing site laughed at me."

Gun-Ho registered for an Office Automation class at the vocational school in Uijeongbu City. He wanted to acquire a certificate for Word Processor and Excel. He knew how to use Word Processor, so he wanted to get the certificate this time.

"Once I get more certificates, my resume will look good with two to three additional lines."

Gun-Ho received hands-on training on office computer skills after work at the vocational school, rubbing his sleepy eyes. Excel seemed interesting after Gun-Ho tried a few tables, but creating complex ones was still confusing.

"Do not doze off and pay attention here." The instructor explained pointing Excel tables on a screen. "Look. You get the total amount automatically, right? Once you put the function, you get the average as well."

The instructor looked really smart. Gun-Ho almost got the illusion that the instructor knew everything in the world. The instructor was a woman younger than Gun-Ho.

"These days, women seem smarter than men. I don't know much. I came this far because Master Park from the philosophy hall and Cheongdam Town Chairman Lee put this idea in my head, but I am still not sure if I am meant to do this."

"Okay, let's get the total average. Did you all get 76?"

All students except Gun-Ho got the right answer, 76; Gun-Ho got 48.

"You didn't put the right function. Please do as I explained."

Every time this sort of things happened, Gun-Ho felt depressed and wondered if he had to continue doing this.

"Am I doing all this for nothing?"

The cost of the commute to the vocational school wasn't small.

"The classes are free since they are sponsored by the government, but I have to commute a distance of over 40 kilometers. Damn. It's a lot."

To make things worse, Gun-Ho couldn't find a parking spot around the vocational school today; so he parked in a residential area and hit the fence of a house. As a result, his rear bumper was dented; it looked ugly.

"Fuck! It will cost a lot to repair that bumper."

Time cures all things. After a few months, Gun-Ho got the certificate for Word Processor and Excel. He called Jong-Suk.

"Jong-Suk?"

"Hey, bro. What's up?"

"Did you have a chance to use your welder certificate?"

"Nah. Holding the certificate is not enough. I need work experience."

"Then just get a job in any factory to gain work experience."

"I was thinking about that too, but I have to go Bucheon to my parents."

"Why?"

"My dad is ill. He was diagnosed with stomach cancer."

"Oh, really?"

"He is in Korea Cancer Center Hospital in Ilsan District right now. My mom has to run the restaurant by herself, so she needed my help."

"Oh, I see. I am so sorry to hear that."

"So I have to go Bucheon to help my mom."

"Don't worry too much. I heard stomach cancer at an early stage can be effectively treated."

"Oh, bro. Did you find any bookkeeping job?"

"I applied for one and failed."

"Why? Because you don't have work experience?"

"Not that. Highly qualified chicks applied for the same job, so I didn't get it."

Jong-Suk giggled. "So are you currently working on your qualification?"

"I've already acquired a few computer related certificates: Word Processor and Excel. Once I see another job opening for a bookkeeper, I will immediately apply for it."

"Wow. You are incredible."

"What?"

"Comparing you 6 months ago, you are fancy now. You have the certificates for Word Processor and Excel in addition to level-2 computerized accounting certificate."

"Am I?"

"The magic of Master Park from Gangnam philosophy hall and Cheongdam Town Chairman Lee seem to be working properly."

"Silly! Go wash and go to bed early. I'll let you go for the night."

19 Chapter 19. Getting A Job In Bookkeeping 3

There was a job posting site called WorkNet operated by the Department of Labor. Many people looked for a job on this site, so there were always lots of applicants for the job posted here. Gun-Ho had been watching the job postings closely for a bookkeeper position, but he hadn't seen anything good yet.

"The statistics say ten people apply for one good open position. I will have no chance to get this kind of job. The employer will hire a woman; why would they hire a man like me over a woman?"

Gun-Ho diligently looked through the classified section in Gyocharo newspaper published twice a week.

"What? Hiring an unmarried and neat looking female bookkeeper?"

It was a job advertisement from a company in an industrial complex located in Uijeongbu City.

"Fuckers! Will live with her? Why are they looking for a neat looking unmarried female?"

There was another advertisement that drew Gun-Ho's attention.

"Job opening for bookkeeping and managing. No experience necessary. Someone who completed military service is encouraged to apply."

The posting is in the newspaper. There was an additional sentence in a small font.

"We are looking for someone who can do bookkeeping and handling sales statements using Excel."

They were kind enough to include their cell phone number. Gun-Ho called the number right away.

"Bangil Gas?"

"Yes."

"I am calling for the position posted in the newspaper. Is the bookkeeper position still open?"

"We are currently taking the applications. You can visit us with your resume."

"All right. The address is the one in the posting?"

"Yes. Pass the Eunhyeon Town township office and take the side road next to the Hyundai Oil gas station."

Gun-Ho got off work early to visit the company in Eunhyeon Town.

"Eunhyeon Town... I've never heard of this area."

It was a small factory with a tent roof. There were a lot of LP gas bottles in the yard. Gun-Ho saw the sign "Office" on the door of a dirty prefabricated building; he entered the office. There were a few desks. The president came and greeted Gun-Ho.

"Did you bring your resume?"

"Yes, here it is."

The president looked at the resume for a while and then asked Gun-Ho, "Are you currently doing bookkeeping work at Dongil Tech?"

"No. I am with a production support team."

Gun-Ho didn't say he was working in a crushing site, but vaguely said he was with a production support team.

"We are not a factory; our company delivers propane gas. Will you take the job? We need someone who handles sales statements by entering the data into Excel and bringing it to the tax accountant office."

Gun-Ho didn't like the company; it was too small and dirty.

'Maybe I'll just gain my work experience here for a while then move to a good company.'

Gun-Ho thought he could use this job as a stepping stone since he had no work experience in accounting at all.

"This company is a 15-kilometer distance from my room at OneRoom, 30-kilometer round trip. I don't have to move. Let's do this."

Gun-Ho decided to take the job.

"I will do my best."

"Alright. I will let you know our decision tomorrow. The phone number on your resume is the contact number I can use?"

"Correct."

The next day, a woman called Gun-Ho.

"Did you submit your resume to Bangil Gas in Eunhyeon Town?"

"Yes, I did."

"We received three applications, and our president liked you the most. You can start tomorrow at 8 AM. Please bring your resident registration with you."

"I will do that."

Gun-Ho finally got a job in bookkeeping. Although the work was half bookkeeping and half handling sales documents, he could still list this job on his resume as 'Bookkeeper in Bangil Gas Corp.' when he applies for another company later.

Gun-Ho handed in his letter of resignation. The eyes of the crushing site team leader widened.

"Why are you handing over your resignation letter? Where are you going?"

"I think I'd better move to another company."

"Which company? Will they pay you more?"

"No, not really, but I'm leaving because I want to try an office job."

"An office job?"

"Actually, I have the computerized accounting certificate and Excel certificate, and I've wanted to work as a bookkeeper, and I just got a job offer."

"Really? You have those kinds of certificates?"

"I am sorry I had to let you know this last minute."

"I'm letting you go since you are moving for a better job... But we will miss you. Who will be a good replacement for your work?"

"I think Mr. Go in the washing team would be good."

"Do you think the washing site team leader will let him go?"

"I'm positive Mr. Go wants to join this crushing team because of the washing team leader's constant nagging."

"Okay. I will ask the director. Ehyo, I really liked to work with you."

Gun-Ho truly felt sorry for the team leader because he was really good to Gun-Ho while the team leader of the washing site had kept nagging him when he worked with him. Gun-Ho was under a lot of stress at that time.

Gun-Ho went to Bangil Gas in Eunhyeon Town, Yangju City with his resident registration.

"I don't see the lady I spoke with on the phone the other day."

Bangil Gas had five workers: three truck drivers, the owner, and Gun-Ho in the office. During the daytime, all three truck drivers were on the road for delivery; it was really quiet in the office. It turned out that the lady Gun-Ho talked with on the phone the other day was the owner's wife; she often came to the office to help her husband do office chores and also to fight with him.

"Oh, this pretty young man will work with us? Are you married?"

The owner's wife had a louder voice than the owner and she was vibrant. The owner and his wife were boisterous, but they seemed to be good-natured people.

"By the way, I am not sure if this company is a corporation. I want to list this company on my resume as Bangil Gas Corp. so it makes me look like I have work experience in a somewhat big company for my next job."

Gun-Ho looked at the tax invoices scattered on the desk in the office; the stamp on the provider section showed Bangil Gas Corp.

"Thank God. It is a corporation!"

The owner said to Gun-Ho who was looking at the tax invoice,

"That is your desk, Goo Jooim."

"Jooim?"

Gun-Ho thought the job title sounded so obsolete it was probably used during the Japanese colonial period.

"After our bookkeeper left the company, I've handled those tax invoices myself by handwriting. Since you are here now, we can issue the tax invoices electronically."

Gun-Ho was perplexed a bit because he hadn't had any experience with issuing electronic tax invoices. He remembered the things he learned from the vocational school. He could issue tax invoices either from the website of National Tax Service, HomeTax, or using an accounting program. During the practical training in the vocational school, Gun-Ho issued a few tax invoices for practice, but he was still worried if he could do perform well in the practical scene.

"You are not using an accounting program here, are you?"

"We are not. I heard tax invoices can be issued from some National Tax Service website..."

"It's National Tax Service HomeTax website. Do you know your login ID and password? We need them."

"ID?"

The owner hurriedly made a phone call to someone.

"Honey, it's me. Do you know our ID for National Tax Service?"

"Why are you asking me that? You should know."

"Why should you talk like that? I'm asking you because I can't remember!"

"Look at the calendar on the wall."

"Okay."

The owner leafed through the big number calendar with a delivery company's name on it on the wall.

"There is no ID here."

"I see it below the company name. I will take note."

Gun-Ho clicked his tongue.

"He is the so-called owner of this company! He should have written it down in his diary or something."

Gun-Ho thought so.

While the owner was away from his desk, Gun-Ho practiced issuing tax invoices. When he made some mistakes in issuing two invoices, he was thinking of tearing them off, but he decided to take them with him home; he shoved them into his pocket.

20 Chapter 20. Factory Worker Working As A Bookkeeper 1

Gun-Ho's life working in a gas delivery company started.

Once the gas was sold to a customer, Gun-Ho issued an electronic tax invoice and added the record to Excel. If an expense was incurred, Gun-Ho documented it and recorded it in Excel.

"Goo Jooim, you can purchase the form to document business expenses from a stationary store. I had seen the previous bookkeeper attach the receipts to the back of the form to document the expenses.

"Yes, that's how we document the expenses. We have to write down the amount of the expense along with a brief explanation about its business purpose. We, then, attach the receipt on the back of that form. We keep these records on a monthly basis and bring them to the tax accountant."

"You do what you have to do. I will be back later."

The owner sometimes took a short trip to somewhere in his small truck with his tools. Every time he did it, his wife stayed in the office.

"Where does he go with his tools?"

"Wouldn't you just know it by looking? He is visiting customer sites for gas pipe repair."

"Oh, I see."

"He is the best in repairing gas pipes. Hahaha."

The owner's wife boasted indirectly of her husband even though they argued a lot when they were together.

"Oh, doesn't he give you the money he received for gas pipe repairing to deposit?"

"Yes, he does."

In fact, the owner didn't deposit the money as often as he received for the repair job. He deposited only the ones that were substantial and required tax invoices.

Gun-Ho could hear the engine sound of a 1-ton truck; the owner must have come back.

"Any news?"

The owner always asked whenever he came back to the office.

"No, nothing special. There were requests from Duksoo store and Shinchun Food for gas. I sent Driver Kim out for delivery."

"Good. I believe we have to pay value-added tax (VAT) next month. Goo Jooim, don't forget."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho had never done VAT reporting before. A guideline for VAT report could be found on the National Tax Service HomeTax website, but he hadn't tried it yet.

"For a VAT, it's an estimated tax payment this time, right?"

Gun-Ho was perplexed; he remembered he had heard there were two types of payments for VAT: an estimated payment and a final payment. He couldn't be totally honest by saying he didn't know about it since it was part of a bookkeeper's job.

"Yes... that's correct."

He just responded for now.

"It will cost me again."

The owner left the office. Gun-Ho opened the National Tax Service HomeTax website right away. Fortunately, the VAT they had to pay next month was the estimated payment.

"Whew, thank God." Gun-Ho marked the calendar with the VAT tax deadline.
"This is how one learns"

Gun-Ho made a call to the tax accountant office which had been handling tax preparation for Bangil Gas. A lady answered the phone.

"Tax accountant office? I am calling from Bangil Gas."

"Bangil Gas? Give me one moment, please. I will get you the person who is in charge of Bangil Gas."

After a while, another clerk picked up the phone.

"This is Bangil Gas. I am the new bookkeeper in Bangil Gas."

Gun-Ho felt abashed at introducing himself as a bookkeeper because he hadn't handled any computerized accounting or journalizing yet.

"Oh, Bangil Gas? Hi."

For the tax accountant office, Bangil Gas was their client, so she was nice on the phone.

"For the VAT reporting next month, what do we have to prepare?"

"We will need a set of tax invoices for each month. Please do not attach them to the expense documents. We also need receipts and simplified tax invoices attached to expense documents."

"Oh, okay. I will do that."

"You can group them all by date and bring to us."

"Then, are you coming to pick up the tax invoices and expense documents?"

"Well... we can do that... but the previous bookkeeper used to bring them to our office..."

"Oh, then I will do that too. Can I have your name please?"

"You can ask for Manager Gang."

"I am Gun-Ho Goo. I'm looking forward to working with you."

"It will be our pleasure working with you. Thank you."

Gun-Ho felt encouraged after talking with the lady. When he worked at a factory, he didn't really have a chance to talk with a young lady at work.

Gun-Ho became better and faster at his job documenting expenses and handling Excel; real-world work experience helped him learn faster as expected. If that was all he had to do at work, Gun-Ho would have been happy. He had to call clients to demand payment, who hadn't paid a bill on time, and he hated doing it.

"Duksoo store? This is from Bangil Gas. I'm calling to let you know we haven't received the payment for the gas we delivered last time."

"I will pay tomorrow."

Usually, the customers on credit firmly promised to pay within a fixed time, but they didn't keep their words.

"You said you would pay by today."

"Hey look, I will pay you, okay? Do you really have to do this in the morning? Let me talk to the owner!"

Some customers raised their voices and Gun-Ho often had to argue with them. For customers who failed to pay for several months, a certification of contents had to be sent to them.

"Goo Jooim, send a certification of contents to Shinchon store. Shitty people!"

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho said he would, but he didn't know how to do it. He searched the internet but he still couldn't figure it out.

"Haven't you done a certification of contents before? There is a file in the first drawer of the cabinet over there. It's the certification of contents file. Leaf through the file; it will help."

Gun-Ho took out the file from the cabinet.

"I should have taken a look at this file already."

When Gun-Ho was in Noryangjin, he had written countless self-introduction essays for job applications. After multiple attempts and following failures in level-9 government job exams, he ran out of money; he, then, tried to find a private sector job only to find out there was no company which would invite him for an interview. No company would hire a low ranked college dropout with a cyber college degree for an office job. That was why Gun-Ho started working at a factory. He just didn't have any other choice.

"I've written more than 100 self-introduction essays. Preparing a certification of contents is a piece of cake."

Gun-Ho typed the certification of contents with excitement.

"Are you done? Then make a quick visit to the post office before they close."

Gun-Ho headed to the post office close by the Township office carrying the certification of contents. He found himself humming in his car.

"Bookkeeping work is easy."

Gun-Ho even started singing while driving.

"That is why one has to have brains. If I chose to learn welding or forklift driving instead of computerized accounting from the vocational school, I would have still worked at a factory."

Gun-Ho arrived at the post office. There was a person in front of him with parcels. Gun-Ho had to wait.

"He has a lot of parcels. Damn it. Why doesn't he just go to a parcel delivery service company?"

After a while, it was his turn. Gun-Ho handed over the envelope with the certification of contents in it to the clerk lady at the counter of the post office.

"How do you want to mail it?"

"I want the certification of contents."

The clerk took out the certification from the envelope to take a look and then looked at Gun-Ho.

"Why is this only one page?"

"Excuse me?"

"There have to be three pages for certification of contents."

The post office clerk gave the envelope back to Gun-Ho, and then called the next person in line.

"Really?"

Gun-Ho headed back to the office scratching his head.

"It is embarrassing. What should I tell him?"

Gun-Ho felt down on the way back to the office while he had felt cheerful enough to sing on the way out of the office earlier.

21 Chapter 21. Factory Worker Working As A Bookkeeper 2

Gun-Ho came back to the office without mailing the certification of contents.

"Did you already mail it out?"

The owner was dozing off and then woke up when Gun-Ho entered the office.

"Um, I came back to pick up my cell phone. I left it in the office."

"Hmmm..."

The owner looked uncomfortable; he walked out of the office.

"Let's get the two missing pages of the certification of contents before he comes back."

Gun-Ho printed out two additional pages of the certification of contents. Gun-Ho hastened to drive to the post office. When he arrived at the post office, this time a foreigner with dark skin was mailing something before Gun-Ho. When it was Gun-Ho's turn, he handed over three pages of certification of contents to the clerk. The clerk carefully looked through the certification.

"You missed the stamp. The stamp of the sender."

Gun-Ho thought 'darn it.' The sender of the certification of contents was the owner of the company, but his signature or stamp was missing. Gun-Ho should have at least stamped with a wooden stamp. Gun-Ho, as a bookkeeper, had the company owner's wooden stamp.

"Oh okay. I will be right back."

The clerk lifted her head again.

"When you stamp the certification, you have to do the covering stamping as well."

"Okay. I will do that."

Gun-Ho felt embarrassed while taking those three pages of certification of contents back.

"That clerk lady probably thought I was very stupid."

When Gun-Ho turned around, the clerk added, "If you are not the sender, you have to prepare the power of attorney. You can find the form over there."

Gun-Ho felt embarrassed again. He quickly took the power of attorney form and headed outside. He looked back at the post office and said, "Bitch, she should have told me earlier instead of making me come here three times. F*ck!"

When Gun-Ho arrived at the office, the owner stood up from his seat and grabbed his tools; he must have been waiting for Gun-Ho to come back.

"Are you on your way out for gas pipe repairing?"

"Stay in the office."

Gun-Ho felt relieved when the owner went out of the office. He quickly took out the owner's wooden stamp from his drawer and stamped on the sender section in the certification of contents. He, then, did the covering stamping, and prepared the power of attorney and stamped on it as well. Gun-Ho made sure the owner's car had left before he headed to the post office hastily.

"We are just closed for today."

The post office clerk told Gun-Ho as she was standing up from her seat. Gun-Ho was perplexed.

"Please do this for me. I came here three times already for this today"

The clerk hesitated, and then went back to her seat.

"Bring it to me quickly."

The clerk took a look at the certification of contents and then stamped on it with a hammer-like stamp. She, then, gave one of three pages back to Gun-Ho.

"Thank you. Thank you."

Gun-Ho bowed to the clerk deeply low as if he wanted to touch the ground with his head. He felt a great sense of relief. Gun-Ho again found himself humming on the way back to the office from the post office.

"This is one of the ways to learn."

It had been over six months since he started working as a bookkeeper at Bangil Gas.

"Cosmos flowers are in blossom."

Time didn't cheat people.

"Come to think of it. It has been exactly one year since I met Chairman Lee."

The Cosmos flowers just blossomed when Gun-Ho saw Chairman Lee at the Pocheon fishing site for the first time.

"I became proficient at my job here. Maybe I should look for a new job?"

Gun-Ho wanted to work in a bigger company where he could get real work experience in bookkeeping. He opened WorkNet website to see if there was an opening for a bookkeeper position.

"What should I tell the owner and his wife? I feel kind of sorry to them. Well, they can find someone else."

Thinking about quitting the current job and getting a new job, Gun-Ho gazed at the Cosmos flowers outside the window.

"Oh, maybe I want to go to the Pocheon fishing site this weekend. I am wondering what Chairman Lee would say if I tell him I am working as a bookkeeper."

Gun-Ho called Jong-Suk. Jong-Suk was working in a freezing machine manufacturing company to gain work experience. Gun-Ho was told that Jong-Suk joined the maintenance team there as an assistant. Jong-Suk's phone kept ringing for a while with no answer.

"He must be tied up at work. He probably doesn't even have time to pick up his phone."

Twenty minutes after Gun-Ho hung up the phone, Jong-Suk called him.

"Uh, bro. Why did you call?"

"Why didn't you pick up my call?"

"I was repairing a compressor."

"You can fix a compressor?"

"No. I was just assisting the team leader in repairing it."

"Hey, you wanna go fishing to Pochun this weekend?"

"This weekend?"

"Yeah. It has been one year since we didn't go there."

"I can't"

"Why not?"

"Our team leader's daughter is getting married this weekend. I gotta go there. Everyone at the factory goes."

"Really? Okay, maybe later then."

After getting off the phone, Gun-Ho wanted to go fishing even more, and he also wondered how Chairman Lee was doing. Gun-Ho wanted to let Chairman Lee know he was working in a bookkeeping job.

"I will go fishing by myself this weekend. I have nothing to do anyway."

Gun-Ho headed to the Pochun fishing site that weekend. It was a long drive, passing by Sanbuk Town. The fishing site was a reservoir far from Seoul and not very known to people, so not many people came to the site

"Cosmos flowers are in full blossom here too. It had been exactly a year."

Gun-Ho looked around to see if Chairman Lee was there.

"He used to come here every weekend. I don't see him today though."

Gun-Ho attached a plastic fishing float to the fishing line and started lure fishing.

"Fishes are not biting today. Did they all run away knowing I am here?"

Gun-Ho moved halfway around the reservoir, reeling his lure back in and casting into the water repeatedly.

"I've got a bite."

Gun-Ho hoisted the flapping fish to the surface. It was a palm-sized bass.

"It's small fry."

Gun-Ho was thinking of letting it go, but he, instead, tossed it to the grass because he remembered bass eat native Korean fish and they could be a threat to the species.

"After one or two hours later, the sun will go down, and the fish will start biting, but I will just go home now."

It was not fun fishing by himself; Gun-Ho retrieved the fishing rod, and sat on a rock and started looking at his smartphone. He checked if there was any new message, and then opened the WorkNet website. There was one job advertisement that drew his attention.

"Hiring a bookkeeper. No experience necessary. For a male applicant, completed military service is required. Having own car is a plus."

The advertisement mentioned about the completed military service. This meant they were accepting male applicants. Gun-Ho got goosebumps.

"Where is this place? Wow, it's far. It is in Asan City ("Asan"), Chungnam Province ("Chungnma")."

He had to move if he decided to work in Asan, Chungnam. He only paid one month's rent as a security deposit for the current room, so it was not a big deal.

"They prefer someone who owns a car, meaning their location is not easy to access without a car."

Most of the factories Gun-Ho had worked for were located in an isolated area. Their locations were hard to reach by public transit. Since many small companies with less than 20 employees did not provide a commuter shuttle, they preferred workers with their own cars. Many factory workers had to possess even a rusty vehicle to go to work.

Some foreign workers owned a car with rattling noise. Vietnamese female workers usually drove a motorcycle to commute.

"It was an excellent decision I made to buy a car when I worked for the factory in Hwaseung. Nowadays, people can buy even a used car on an installment plan, which is nice. It is also nice that even the people with bad credit can buy a car if they have a job."

Gun-Ho purchased the car when he was working as an injection molding worker in a plastic factory in Hwaseong. He used to miss a bus that came to the bus station once per hour when he didn't have a car. This is why he purchased a 2006 AventeXD for 3,000,000 won. There were 13,000 kilometers on it at that time. He had several small accidents with that car, in the beginning, so he couldn't save money because he had to spend fixing the car. However, he didn't have any car accident afterward.

22 Chapter 22. Factory Worker Working As A Bookkeeper 3

Gun-Ho was lost in thought looking at the WorkNet website.

"I have nothing more to learn at Bangil Gas. Whether it works out or not, I will update my resume when I get home. I can then email my resume to apply for that job."

Gun-Ho scrolled down further to see the name of the company.

"The company in Asan is YS Tech. YS is the initials of Young-Sam, our former president Young-Sam Kim? This company is related to him? Haha. Probably not. The equity of this company is 300,000,000 won, and it has 80 employees. It is somewhat a large company."

Gun-Ho loaded his car with his fishing gears.

Once he came back to his room, he updated his resume with additional work experience. 'Bookkeeping at Bangil Gas Corp.' It looked gorgeous. He also added the computerized accounting level-2 certificate, Word Processor level 1, and ITQ Excel under the certificate section of his resume.

"I wish I had level-1 computerized accounting certificate. Well, the company said 'no experience necessary', so level-2 certificate should be enough. Experienced high-paid people will not apply for this type of job which does not even require any work experience in the field."

Comforting himself, Gun-Ho emailed his resume to the company. It was already 11 PM, but he didn't want to head to bed. He felt too great after sending out his resume, and he also was a little hungry. He went to a convenience store in his flip-flops, dragging his feet, and bought a triangle Gimbab, dried squid, and peanuts.

"It is a company with 80 employees; I could learn real bookkeeping work there. A bookkeeper usually works closely with the owner, so even though I am new to

this company if I earn the owner's trust I could get a raise. If I make 40,000,000 won per year, I can have a decent life in a provincial city, having hobbies after work, etc. However, I've never lived in Asan even though I've passed by it before. Well, all provincial cities should be the same."

The beer tasted delicious today. Gun-Ho did some physical exercise by going to the fishing site, and he applied for a job today. He felt great, and he enjoyed his beer. Feeling slightly drunk, Gun-Ho soon fell asleep.

Gun-Ho showed consistency at work as a bookkeeper of Bangil Gas in Eunhyeon Town, Yangju City.

"I am so bored doing the same work day after day."

Gun-Ho usually worked alone at the office after the owner left the office for gas pipe repairing. He had no colleagues, no supervisor, and no subordinate at work.

"My title is a bookkeeper, but I am not really a bookkeeper here. I am more like a bill collector. By the way, when should I expect to hear from the company in Asan? It has been ten days already since I applied for a position there."

In the past, when Gun-Ho gave up on the level-9 government employee exam and applied for a job in the private sector, he used to submit a self-introduction essay along with his resume. However, this company in Asan didn't require a self-introduction essay; Gun-Ho submitted only his resume.

"I don't think I will get the job. Maybe many highly qualified chicks applied for the same job again."

Gun-Ho almost gave up on getting the job in the company in Asan he applied for earlier. He started worrying about his future.

"If I stay in this tiny company, when would I be able to get married? I get 1,800,000 won per month. I have to pay the rent, car payment, sunshine loan payment, student loan payment for my college, and cell phone bill... almost nothing is left in my hands after deducting all of the above from my monthly salary. Should I marry a foreign girl? They wouldn't like me either if they know I have no money, would they?"

Gun-Ho felt depressed.

"F*uck, why are my parents so poor!? They shouldn't have married if they didn't have money!"

Gun-Ho resented his parents.

Bangil Gas, the company where Gun-Ho worked for, didn't place a lunch order for employees since there was no one in the office except Gun-Ho and the owner. For lunch, the owner and Gun-Ho took turns going to the Korean restaurant close by the town entrance. Factory workers in uniform from the surrounding area usually crowded this Korean restaurant around noontime.

"Today's menu is pork!"

Pork was Gun-Ho's favorite. He heaped the pork dish on his compartment food tray and added lettuce. When Gun-Ho couldn't find an empty table, he asked to share a table.

"Do you mind if I sit here?"

Two ladies lifted their heads; they seemed to be Southeast Asian.

"Today is my lucky day. I am sitting with ladies."

It was not easy to find young people in a rural small factory area; most factory workers in uniform were in their 40s or 50s except foreign workers. Many foreign workers were young people. Gun-Ho glanced quietly at the young ladies in front of him.

"They look a bit different from us, and they are slim."

Gun-Ho was thinking while having his lunch. Those ladies in a factory uniform also shot him a curious look. Gun-Ho was a young man.

Gun-Ho started looking at his smartphone while eating. There was a new message; he opened it.

"What is this? A message demanding the interest overdue?"

Gun-Ho read the message. It was from the YS Tech in Asan to which Gun-Ho sent his job application the other day.

"We appreciate your interest in YS Tech and the bookkeeper position. We would like to invite you for an interview at our office. The interview will be conducted at the conference room next Wednesday at 10 AM."

"It came!"

Gun-Ho got goosebumps. He could feel his body's temperature rise and it caused blushing in his face. He felt like maybe this could be a lucky opportunity for him.

"What if highly competitive people applied for this job like the last time I applied for that pharmaceutical company bookkeeper position?"

The trip to Asan for the interview could become a waste of time and labor.

Anyway, Gun-Ho felt great and felt like he could fly. He finished his pleasant lunch and got out of the restaurant. He was humming to himself the melody of IU (a Korean singer) song. When he arrived at the office, the owner's wife was sitting at the table; the owner was not there.

"Any good news?"

"No, not really."

"You were singing? I could see on your face something good is going on. You got a girlfriend?"

"No, no."

"Well, since you came back from your lunch, I will leave. The boss went to the city hall to take care of something."

"Oh, he did?"

When the owner's wife left the office, Gun-Ho started thinking of possible excuses he could make to take time off for the interview next Wednesday.

"It takes probably about three hours to Asan by car. There could be a morning traffic jam and I could get lost on the way as well. I should then leave four hours before the interview time; it will be 6 AM to be safe."

Gun-Ho looked at the clock on the wall.

"If the interview is completed at 11 AM, I can come back to work by 2 PM, assuming I skip my lunch. Should I tell the owner I received a notice for the military reserve force training at my parents' address, or should I tell him that I am sick?"

Gun-Ho tried to come up with a good excuse; he decided to tell the owner his father was sick and he had to help him on his hospitalization.

"The owner will understand if I tell him I have to take my father from Juan Town to the Gil Hospital in Incheon, and I would be back to work in the afternoon. I have to keep this job; I might not get the job in Asan."

It was on Wednesday. Gun-Ho dressed up for the job interview. He combed his hair neatly.

"I had a haircut yesterday; I look good."

Gun-Ho polished his shoes. He left his room heading to Asan. It was early morning and the skies were still pitch black.

23 Chapter 23. Factory Worker Working As A Bookkeeper 4

"I wonder what kind of company this is."

Gun-Ho was heading to Asan for the job interview, filled with expectations and worries.

"What kind of person is the owner? Would he be a power-trip type of person?"

His car was making loud noises while he was driving because he didn't get the muffler fixed yet.

He was passing a town called Yuyangg when he stopped to put some gas in his car before continuing his trip.

"It will be a long trip to Asan. I'd better fill up the tank!"

After he filled his car, Gun-Ho opened Ole navigation application on his smartphone.

"So the company is located at Dunpo Town, Asan City. Let me enter the destination to the app. Uh? It's not that far. It's close to Cheonan City? I will stop by the rest area; I left home so early this morning I didn't have a chance to have breakfast. I think I have time to eat a udong (a noodle soup) and drink a cup of coffee."

Gun-Ho passed Yangju City Hall and entered the automobile-only road.

"It is nice to see not many cars here because it is still early morning."

Gun-Ho's old Avante well passed Uiyeongbu IC, making a rattling noise and headed to Namyangju City.

"So many toll roads on the way. F*uck!"

Gun-Ho entered Gyeongbu Highway from Pangyo after passing Han River

Bridge.

"Is this Pangyo? Byung-Tae Hwang who was ranked number one in my class is working in a research facility somewhere here in Pangyo. That dude graduated from KAIST. Of course, he seems to be doing very well as expected."

Gun-Ho had a udong at Giheung Rest Area and a coffee from a vending machine. He, then, called into work with the excuse he made up.

"Boss? I'm Goo Jooim. My father in Incheon got sick and I have to take him to a hospital. I will come to work this afternoon."

"Your father? Is it serious?"

"I am not sure. He has a severe stomach ache and keeps throwing up."

"Really? Don't worry about work. Take care of your father."

"Thank you, boss."

Gun-Ho felt sorry to the owner. He hung up the phone and continued driving. Following the direction of the navigation application, Gun-Ho got out of the North-Cheonan IC and continued driving on the national highway.

"There is the sign for Dunpo Town!"

Gun-Ho expected a small town in the countryside. However, what he saw was a large industrial park.

"What is this? Asan Techno Valley? Wow. It looks amazing."

All factories in Asan Techno Valley were either large or at least middle-sized companies. They were huge.

"YS Tech which I am heading to is not far from here. Only 8 kilometers more to go. Uh? Where is this? Oh, this is Dunpo Town. I see a Lotteria; it must be larger than Gwangjeok Town, Yangju City. If I pass the interview successfully today, I will have to find a room in this area, won't I?"

Gun-Ho found the YS Tech factory which he had a job interview for in Shinbong

Town after passing Dunpo Town.

"Hmm... Its appearance is not bad at all. It's still ten past nine. The interview time is 10, so I have plenty of time before the interview. Should I look around Dunpo Town? Maybe not. I don't want to risk being late for the interview. I will just take a nap or listen to music in my car."

Gun-Ho tried to take a nap in his car after parking it in front of a community hall, but he couldn't sleep. He played with his smartphone and listened to music to pass the time.

"It's twenty to ten. Let me head out to the interview place."

Gun-Ho was thinking of driving into the factory, but instead, he parked along the factory wall as he saw lots of cars did the same. There was a security office next to the main entrance, but he didn't see a security officer there. At that moment, Gun-Ho saw a person in a uniform passing by the road. He asked where he could find a conference room. The man indicated a two-floor red brick building. Gun-Ho walked to the second floor. There was an interview room sign on the door of the conference room.

"Excuse me."

Gun-Ho entered the room. There were seven to eight people sitting in the room. He could tell by looking at them that they were all there for an interview. When Gun-Ho entered into the room, everyone glanced at him quickly and then kept focusing on their smartphones.

"Is everyone here?"

A lady in her mid-40's came out to the front and said, "Hello everyone. I am a manager at YS Tech. We will start the interview in a moment. You will have the interview with our president in the next room. Three persons will enter the room at once. Once your name is called, please come forward and sit on one of the front seats."

Gun-Ho looked around; most of the people were female, and there were two other males. As soon as the clock struck 10, the lady called three people's names. Gun-Ho was in the second group. It took about twenty minutes for the first group to complete the interview. Gun-Ho went to the interview room with two

other candidates.

"Ji-Hae Choi, Hwa-Young Kim, and Gun-Ho Goo, please come with me."

Gun-Ho and two other candidates entered the room together. There was a man in his late 40's sitting at the table; the T-shirt under his suit jacket was colorful. The manager lady entered the room along with the candidates and sat next to him.

"This is our president."

The interviewer was the president. Gun-Ho looked at his face thoroughly.

"Wow, he is amazingly handsome. He looks like a TV celebrity."

The president was not only handsome, but he was also dressed sophisticated and chic. The president didn't say anything; he was just looking at the file the manager handed to him. He, then, raised his head and asked the candidate sitting in the first chair.

"Ms. Ji-Hae Choi, are you married?"

"Yes, I am."

"Then how do you take care of your child while you are at work?"

"My mother is living close to mine, and she helps me a lot to take care of my child."

"Ms. Hwa-Young Kim. You graduated school this year?"

"Yes, I did."

Gun-Ho turned his head to look at her. She looked younger than 20 years old, but her face was covered with a thick layer of makeup with long eyelashes and red lipstick.

"Did you graduate from Cheonan Women's Commercial High School?"

"It's Information Technology High School."

"Hmmm..."

The president continued looking at the file. He didn't ask about any certificates or other qualifications at all.

"What does your father do for a living?"

"He is working in an elementary school administration."

"Hmmm..."

The president glanced at all three candidates, then looked at the file again.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, are you currently working at Bangil Gas?"

"Yes, I have to move to Cheonan for personal reasons, so I will soon resign from the company."

The president didn't ask why Gun-Ho had to move to Cheonan.

"Did you complete your military service?"

"Yes, I had fully completed the military service."

"Hmmm... Ok. This is it. You can all leave the room. Next group."

The president asked a few simple questions and then called the next group in. Gun-Ho thought the interview was too short and simple.

The next group entered the room. There were eight interviewees in total, so the last group consisted of two candidates. That group took about twenty minutes for the interview as well. After all candidates were interviewed, the manager came out of the interview room and said with a broad smile on her face, "Thank you all for coming today. It would be really nice if we could hire all of you, but we only have one open position. It will be a difficult decision for us. We will contact you by next Tuesday at the 10th. Please take these envelopes with you. These are from our president appreciating your time to come here, hoping to help your transportation expense for today's interview."

The manager distributed a white envelope to each candidate.

"I came this far but didn't do much for the interview. Do they have someone

already for the position in their mind?"

Gun-Ho suspected. Giving the money for the transportation cost to the candidates was a sensible move, Gun-Ho thought.

"Whatever."

Gun-Ho headed back to Yangju City. He opened the white envelope in his car; there was 30,000 won in it.

24 Chapter 24. Moving to Asan, Chungnam 1

Gun-Ho came back to Yangju and went back to his work at Bangil Gas again.

Once sales were made, Gun-Ho issued electronic tax invoices and added earnings and expenses to <Daily Earnings and Expenses> table in Excel, and then reported it to the owner.

Gun-Ho made sure to collect all receipts of every business expense incurred and attached them with glue to the back of an expense form he had purchased from a stationary store in order to properly document them. If there was a client with an outstanding balance for LP gas, Gun-Ho would make a collection phone call to that client as well. He also ran errands for the owner.

"Years of my life will go by like this?"

Gun-Ho was barely making a living; he felt anxious about getting old without saving money.

"It's Wednesday and I don't hear anything from that company in Asan which I had an interview with."

Gun-Ho was constantly checking his smartphone to see if there was any text message from the company. He increased the ringtone of his phone to make sure he didn't miss any calls. There was no phone call, let alone any text message.

"I don't think I got the job. Let's just move on; it is a lost cause. So many smart people are out there. I can't compete with them with my rubbish work experience and qualification. I just have to appreciate the opportunity for having a job interview with them."

Friday came around after Wednesday and Thursday. Gun-Ho gave up on getting a position in the company in Asan. He once again started looking through the newspaper classified section and WorkNet; however, there was no job advertisement which drew Gun-Ho's attention.

"The companies posting a bookkeeper job opening in a newspaper classified section will hire a female, not me. If they hire a male for the job, that's probably because the position is half bookkeeping and half irrelevant chores."

After work, Gun-Ho usually surfed the internet on his laptop in dim light or he went to the PC room in the neighborhood. He felt like he was falling so much farther behind in life compared to his high school friends, which made him feel depressed.

"Won-Chul Jo who is now married should be doing fine, shouldn't he? Byung-Tae Hwang who is working in a research facility of a startup company in Pangyo is getting married soon. He posted about his wedding on Facebook but didn't personally inform me. He could easily find my phone number by contacting Won-Chul or the others."

Gun-Ho drank soju almost every other day, and that increased his alcohol tolerance.

"I am destined to live in the countryside. My life is f*cked up. I have ShinWangJaeWang fate? ShinWangJaeWang my a*s."

It had been more than two weeks since Gun-Ho had a job interview with the company in Asan. The memory of the interview was fading away when he received a phone call from that company, a very unexpected one at that.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? How are you? I am the manager of YS Tech in Asan."

"Oh, hi. This is Gun-Ho Goo."

"I am sorry that we took a long time to contact you. You have been hired as our bookkeeper. Can you start on the 1st of next month?"

Gun-Ho came to his senses by this unexpected and sudden phone call.

"Oh, of course, sure. I... I can."

"You have only five days left until the 1st of next month. Can you manage to quit the current job and start a new job with us within five days?"

"Of course, of course. I can certainly do that!"

"Let me tell you then what to bring on your first day of work. You might want to get a pen and a paper."

"Yes, I am ready."

Gun-Ho was so perplexed that he dropped his cell phone while looking for a pen and a paper, and stumbled over the computer power cord.

"You should bring a resident registration, a resident registration abstract showing the status of your military service duty, your highest school diploma, Consent to Collect and Use Personal Data, Identity Assurance Statement, and a work experience certificate letter from your current employer. I will send the forms for the Consent to Collect and Use Personal Data and Identity Assurance Statement to the email address indicated on your resume."

"Okay. I will prepare all those documents and bring them on my first day of work!"

"You can come by 8 AM on the 1st next month. I will see you then."

"Thank you. Thank you."

Gun-Ho felt so grateful to be hired by this company that he repeated "thank you" twice.

"I got it! I got the job!"

Gun-Ho clapped. He felt like he could fly.

"By the way, why did they call me just now? They said they would contact me by last Wednesday."

Gun-Ho sat on the chair and started thinking.

"I guess that the person they hired decided not to work with them, so they hired me instead as a substitute. Of course, I can't be their first choice. Well, they hired me anyway. Let's move to Asan."

Gun-Ho stopped by the Eunhyeon Township Office to get the resident registration and the resident registration abstract on the way to work after

collecting bills.

"I can get my college diploma online, but what about the work experience certificate letter? There is no such thing in Bangil Gas. Well, I can find some samples on the internet and make one for me."

After he returned to the office, Gun-Ho drafted a work experience certificate letter referring to some examples he found on the internet.

"I need the boss' stamp to officially seal this letter... I have his stamp for the tax invoices stamping purpose; should I just use it?"

Gun-Ho thought he still should ask the owner for it.

"When he comes back from the gas pipe repairing work, I will carefully inform him."

A little after five o'clock, the owner came back to the office, looking exhausted.

"A*sholes! They tried to bargain for the repairing cost. I should have just left without fixing their pipes. Sh*t!"

The owner slumped down in his chair, looking really tired. Gun-Ho had to tell the owner that he would quit the job, but he couldn't because the owner seemed very tired.

"Gee, it is already half past five. Goo Jooim, you can go home."

Gun-Ho hesitated and the owner looked at him with a question mark on his face.

"What's the matter? Do you have something you want to tell me?"

"Umm... I am so sorry to tell you that I think I have to move to the city where my parents are."

"Why? Because your father is in the hospital?"

"My parents want me to come, and they are old now..."

"Hmmm..."

The owner looked very uncomfortable.

"I will have to find someone again. I really liked you here."

"Well, I've been thinking, and I think your wife can handle the work. You can save money that way."

"My wife? She doesn't even know how to work with a computer."

"She just needs to get the knack of it. She will become better and faster at the job after one or two months of practice."

"I know I can save money... But she always tries to argue with me whenever she is here in the office. That is the problem."

"Haha. That's because she likes you a lot."

"Well, I will have to think about it."

"I will work until the end of this month then."

"You leave that early?"

"My parents are pressing me."

"Oh well, what can I do about it."

"And once I move to the city where my parents live in, I might need a work experience certificate letter from this company."

"A work experience certificate letter? I've never done it before."

"I already drafted the letter. I just need your stamp. You can use the same stamp we use for tax invoices."

"Really? Then you do what you have to do."

"Thank you."

"Go home before it gets dark."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho walked out of the office and turned his head to look behind him.

"Bangil Gas. I have so many good memories of this factory. The boss and his wife are good-natured people. Once I become successful, I will come and visit them."

It was getting dark; Gun-Ho drove to the Gwangjeok Township Office area where his room was located. He called the landlord to give him the notice to vacate his room.

25 Chapter 25. Moving to Asan, Chungnam 2

Gun-Ho handed over his job to the next person who would carry out his duties. The new bookkeeper was a woman who was in her 40s. The owner considered working with his wife to save money, however, he eventually decided to hire someone else. He asked Gun-Ho to post the job advertisement on a newspaper classified section.

Once the bookkeeping job opening was posted, eleven people applied for the job. The owner told Gun-Ho to pick someone who was living close to the company, without going through the interview process. The owner's wife glared at the owner more often and it led to another fight between them.

"Since the boss hired a woman, his wife will be glaring at him more frequently."

A grin appeared on Gun-Ho's face.

Two days before he had to leave to Asan, Gun-Ho had already packed all his belongings. All kitchen appliances were not his; they came with the room. Gun-Ho had to pack his blanket, clothes, and books.

"It's nice that I have already thrown out all the unnecessary stuff when I moved here from Pocheon. This time, the moving will be so much easier and simpler since I have only a few stuff to pack."

However, Gun-Ho's Avante trunk and its backseat were fully filled up with his stuff.

Gun-Ho entered the automobile-only road in his Avante from Goeup Town in Yangju; his car was making rattling noise.

"Goodbye, Yangju City."

Gun-Ho looked at the distant apartment buildings in Yangju; he was choked with emotion. Gun-Ho continued driving for a while until he came to a fork in the

road; one of roads was leading to Pocheon.

"Pocheon City, goodbye to you, too."

Gun-Ho thought about the life he spent in this area. He spent one year in Pocheon as a factory worker, six months at a factory in Yangju, and another 6 months as a bookkeeper. He spent two years of his youth in total in this area; he became filled with emotion.

"If I add my days at Hwaseong working in a factory, I have spent four years of my life as a factory worker. All I have in my hands, as a result, is this old and shabby Avante that makes a loud noise and is not even worth 3,000,000 won. F*ck. What a loser."

Once Gun-Ho entered Gyeongbu Expressway, he could see a lot of cars there.

"All the cars before me are luxury cars. BMW, Benz, Land Rover, Genesis, Grandeur, K7. Sh*t! But my car makes the loudest noise."

Gun-Ho didn't expect to come to this road again. Since the company in Asan took way longer than normal to contact him to let him know that he got the job, Gun-Ho almost gave up on that position. He felt so lucky to the point that it didn't feel real to get this job.

"Lucky? Well, even so, it is an entry position with probably a 1,800,000 won monthly salary. For the past four years, I have been moving around from Hwaseong to Pocheon and to Yangju without being able to save any money. I am now 32 already, and I am moving to a new city again, Asan. I must be a bohemian."

Gun-Ho started humming out of boredom; it was Bohemian Rhapsody.

"Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?"

Caught in a landslide. No escape from reality."

Tears appeared in Gun-Ho's eyes. He continued humming.

"Open your eyes. Look up to the skies and see.

I'm just a poor boy, I need no sympathy.

Because I'm easy come, easy go.

A little high, little low.

Anyway the wind blows, doesn't really matter to me, to me."

Gun-Ho finally let out hot tears.

Gun-Ho stopped by Anseong Rest Area and rinsed his eyes with water in the rest room. He then purchased a bottle of water and drank it; he felt much better.

"I will probably not be able to find any available OneRoom in Dunpo Town in Asan right now; let's try Dujeong Town in Cheonan City."

Gun-Ho decided to go to Dujeong Town in Cheonan City which wasn't far from the YS Tech where he would start his new job. The town was well-developed commercially and industrially, with stores and various types of residential buildings, so it was easy to find a OneRoom or OneRoomTel where one can move in right away. Gun-Ho had been in Dujeong Town once when he worked as an injection molding worker in a plastic factory in Hwaseong.

Gun-Ho could easily find a OneRoomTel in Dujeong Town as expected.

"OneRoomTel and Jjimjilbang (Korean bathhouse) are my hometown forever, where a bohemian can rest and breathe comfortably."

Gun-Ho knocked on the rental office door of a OneRoomTel while humming.

A bald man opened the door while rubbing his sleepy eyes.

"Do you have a room available for a one month rental?"

"We do, but you have to wait until tomorrow for the internet connection, though."

"That's fine. How much is it?"

"260,000 won!"

When Gun-Ho took out his credit card to pay the price, the OneRoomTel owner's eyes widened, and he said that he needed to be paid in cash.

"If you have to pay in credit card, it will be 280,000 won instead; there is a VAT for it."

Gun-Ho didn't have cash on him.

"I will be back then. I will have to withdraw cash from an ATM."

Gun-Ho found an ATM close to the OneRoomTel and could pay the first month rent. After moving into his new room, he laid down on the bed.

"Wow, this is just like a prison. It's so small. The bathroom is so tiny that I won't even be able to turn around. The room in Yangju is a palace compared to this one. Well, let's just stay here for a month."

Gun-Ho went to work, the YS Tech carrying a big envelope of the documents that he was told to bring on his first day of work. The company had eighty employees, the largest factory that Gun-Ho had ever worked for.

"Lots of people are here already."

"Hey! Where are you going?"

A security guard stopped Gun-Ho.

"I am going to the accounting department on the second floor."

"You should have let me know first. Go to the second floor then."

Gun-Ho went up to the second floor. On the second floor, there were an accounting team, sales team, logistics team, etc. They called it a team, but there seemed to be only one or two people working in each team; Gun-Ho could see only a few desks in each team.

"Hello. I was told to come to this office."

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo! Please come here and have a seat."

Gun-Ho sat on the folding chair which the manager indicated and handed the

documents he brought to the manager. The manager looked through the papers carefully.

"The president will come to the office soon. We will see him first, and then I will introduce you to the rest of the team."

Someone entered the office; everyone in the office stood up and bowed to that person. It was probably the president. The manager grabbed the papers from her desk and stood up.

"Come with me."

Gun-Ho followed the manager to the president's office. On the way to the president's office, Gun-Ho noticed that the manager's belly was bulging; she must be pregnant. The manager entered the president's office after knocking on the door.

"This is our new employee in the accounting team."

The manager introduced Gun-Ho to the president. The president looked still handsome. The president was holding an economic newspaper which he put on the desk before saying,

"Oh, really? Please come and have a seat."

Gun-Ho carefully sat at the end of the table.

26 Chapter 26. Moving to Asan, Chungnam 3

The president looked at the manager and said, "Manager Kim, can we have some tea?"

The manager laid out all the papers that Gun-Ho brought in today in front of the president before standing up.

"I will bring some tea."

After the manager left for preparing tea, only Gun-Ho and the president were left in the office.

"Where is your home?"

"I am currently staying in Dujeong Town, Cheonan City. I am planning to move to Dunpo Town soon."

"What about your parents?"

"They are in Incheon."

"Hmm..."

The manager brought three cups of green tea. The president spoke after having one sip of green tea. He didn't even bother looking through the Gun-Ho's application papers.

"You have probably noticed already that our company is not big enough to require two persons in an accounting team. We decided to hire one more person to assist Manager Kim because she is expecting a baby soon. The pay is not high, but it will gradually increase as you work hard."

"I understand."

Gun-Ho responded by bending himself to show his respect.

"Oh, Manager Kim! How much do we pay to the new employee in the quality assurance team downstairs?"

"It is 1,800,000 won."

"Our starting salary is 1,800,000 won. I had looked through your application when we had the interview, and I believe you didn't have a lot of work experience, Mr. Goo..."

The president couldn't remember Gun-Ho's name; he picked up Gun-Ho's resume from his desk. He found Gun-Ho's name on top of the resume and said, "We didn't actually select you, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. The person we initially hired had ten years of work experience in a fodder company, but she decided to stay with her current employer. That's how we hired you. Since you are male and have work experience in a factory, we thought you could work in other teams later on such as the general affair, logistics, or sales if necessary."

"I see. I appreciate it."

"Our company has a very friendly work environment. Many of our workers are long-term employees. Manager Kim also has been working with us for fifteen years probably; isn't it?"

The president looked at Manager Kim's face.

"Yes, that's right."

"Manager Kim will explain you about your work here. If you work hard, you can be promoted to manager and general manager. You do look like a hard working person."

The president smiled at Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho felt so grateful and he bowed deeply to the president.

Manager Kim introduced the employees on the second floor to Gun-Ho.

"This is Seon-Hong Hwang, our general affairs manager."

The general affairs manager looked three to four years older than Gun-Ho.

"I am Gun-Ho Goo; I will be working in the accounting team. I look forward to working with you."

"I am the one who's look forward to working with you. You will be working in the accounting team that handles money."

The general affairs manager seemed to be a sarcastic person. Gun-Ho was introduced to the logistics team leader and the sales manager as well. The logistics team leader and sales manager were both in their 50s. They were so busy at the time that they didn't pay attention to Gun-Ho.

"The logistics team has two more workers, and there is a sales assistant manager as well; they seem to be working away from the office at the moment, so you can meet them later."

When Manager Kim came back to her desk with Gun-Ho, the general affairs manager came to her.

"You need to give me his papers."

Manager Kim handed the papers to him. The general affairs manager said to Gun-Ho,

"I will have to give you the employment contract, so stop by my desk later."

"Okay, I will do that."

Manager Kim showed Gun-Ho's desk which was next to hers.

"No one is using that desk. You can work there. The computer is not new, but it still works well. I will make a link to the accounting program that I am using so you can use it too."

"What accounting program does this company use? Is it Douzone?"

"Yes, we are using Douzone."

Douzone is an accounting software that was developed by Douzone company. Gun-Ho would finally start working with an accounting software.

"As the president told you, I will be on maternity leave after three months from now. As such, you should familiarize yourself with the work during the next three months."

"I will do my best. I'd love to learn from you and to have you as my mentor and big sister."

"I saw your resume earlier. I am actually ten years older than you. Haha."

If so, she was already 42 years old. Being pregnant at this age made it evident that she had married late.

"Is that so? You have extensive work experiences and you are an expert in this field. Me... I have a lot to learn. In my previous company, they didn't even use any accounting software."

"You know how to do journalizing, right? While you are journalizing, you just need to record them. I will do the tax return when I come back, you just need to record deposits and withdrawals, and fill in the expense report accordingly."

Gun-Ho felt really anxious. He felt like he would get lost even in journalizing. Manager Kim seemed to be concerned a bit about Gun-Ho as well.

"Are you done here?"

The general affairs manager came over.

"Not yet. We will need a few more minutes."

"I have to go to the Department of Labor after processing Mr. Goo's papers. So please finish up with him as soon as you can. Mr. Goo will have to sign the employment contract and meet with the team leaders and supervisors."

"Ten minutes will do."

The general affairs manager didn't seem comfortable with what Manager Kim said. He went back to his desk while murmuring.

Manager Kim warned Gun-Ho quietly in a low tone, "The general affairs manager has a ferocious temper. You want to be careful with him. He graduated

at Dankook University here in Cheonan. He joined our company through some high-ranking official."

"Oh, really?"

Manager Kim talked more about a few tasks Gun-Ho had to perform. Gun-Ho diligently wrote it down, but he didn't fully understand what she said.

Gun-Ho went to the general affairs manager.

"This is the employment contract. Let's start by signing on this paper."

Gun-Ho had seen the employment contract before when he worked in a production line in a factory. Gun-Ho signed on the contract without any problem. The general affairs manager continued talking while looking through Gun-Ho's resume.

"You graduated from a cyber college. Is that college accredited?"

"Yes. As far as I know, it is an accredited college."

"You went to a college in the countryside as well. You need to bring the enrollment certificate for that college. Also, please bring the level-2 computerized accounting certificate. We need to include all of those papers in your file."

"I, I will do that."

"Since you will be working in one of the influential teams, accounting team, I hope you will be easy with our general affairs team."

The general manager extended his hand for a handshake while implying something. Gun-Ho laughed while shaking hands.

"I believe all teams have equal power; there is no such thing as a more influential team."

"That's not true. Our team handles the Four Major Public Insurance, but the withholding tax is handled by the accounting team."

"Is it? Haha. I am not so sure yet."

"Let's go to the work site and meet with people. If you don't meet with them now, they will talk behind your back when they see you in the cafeteria."

Gun-Ho followed the general affairs manager to the work site. He stopped by the quality assurance team, production team, and maintenance team, and introduced Gun-Ho to the team leaders. They all welcomed Gun-Ho with broad smiles, maybe because it was their first time meeting him. The team leader of the production team talked to the general affairs manager.

"Sir, the paystub for the last month doesn't seem to be right. The withholding tax was higher than the previous month as well."

"Oh, that? We have this skillful worker in the accounting team now. He will take care of it from now on."

Gun-Ho understood that the general affairs manager was a twisted talker.

27 Chapter 27. B2B Electronic Payment 1

The next day, Gun-Ho started his new job in the accounting team, sitting at his new desk.

"This is an office job. I am so happy that I don't have to do physical work."

Physically demanding job requires strenuous manual labor. Even though the object the manual worker has to lift at work is not so heavy, if he has to lift it repeatedly, it causes physical pain in certain parts of the body. It could be the worker's waist or wrist, or it could be his neck. When Gun-Ho worked at Dongil Tech in Yangju as a factory worker, he felt pain in his neck during physical work. Gun-Ho didn't have to suffer anymore.

"Here is the login ID and password for Douzone. Try to log in."

Manager Kim handed the chart of accounts to Gun-Ho, which she used to keep under the glass top of her desk.

"Are you giving me the chart? What about you? I can just make a copy of it for myself."

"Nah, that's okay. I memorized them all."

"You did?"

Gun-Ho watched Manager Kim working, from his desk next to hers. She was very fast in entering the data. When she was calculating numbers with the electronic calculator, she was so quick that her fingers were invisible.

"Wow, you are so fast. My eyes can't even follow your fingers."

"Stop watching me working and start entering this data. It is the detailed statement of deposits and withdrawals for our major banks from yesterday."

Gun-Ho started entering the data in the accounting software while holding the

statement.

"Hmm. Rent? Okay, the rent is supposed to go to the debit column on the left side, and on the right side, the credit column, I need to put the landlord's name."

"You shouldn't say all those things out loud when you work. Whew, when are you going to finish up by fumbling like that? After entering the data, you need to print out the account payable/account receivable and cash payments as well."

"Okay, I will speed up."

Manager Kim was verifying the data that Gun-Ho had just entered from her desk. Manager Kim's computer and Gun-Ho's computer were sharing the same accounting software and data, so she had access to Gun-Ho's data within the application.

"You missed the service fee in the rent you just input."

"A service fee?"

"When you transfer money, a service fee incurs. Even though it is only 500 won, you shouldn't miss it. In accounting, you must not miss even 1 won."

"Huh? Oh, I will do it again."

"Whew, we sure will have tough days."

Manager Kim seemed to be worried about the days ahead with Gun-Ho.

"When you enter the service fee, don't forget to add the name of the bank."

"I, I am so sorry. I will do it right away."

At that moment, the president stopped by where these two were working.

"How's it going?"

The president looked at Gun-Ho's face and said.

"Yes, I am doing my best."

The president then looked at Manager Kim's face.

"Manager Kim, did we receive 20,000,000 won through the B2B payment from Namdojeongmill yesterday?"

"Yes, we received it."

Gun-Ho listened to the conversation between the president and Manager Kim.

"B2B?"

Gun-Ho had heard of the terminology, B2B, but he hadn't directly handled it before.

The president was about to leave when he turned around and talked to Manager Kim again.

"We didn't apply the early payment discount to that amount, did we?"

"Right, we didn't."

"Then please apply the discount to the amount, and send 5,000,000 won out of it to my personal account."

"Okay, I will do that."

"I have a business trip to Japan for 2 nights and 3 days from tomorrow. Please get 100 of 50,000 won for me."

The president handed his credit card to Manager Kim and left.

Manager Kim turned off the accounting software and took out the battery-powered device, TIME OTP (a password-generating device), from her desk drawer. She then opened one of the major banks website—Industrial Bank of Korea.

Gun-Ho worked until late at night every day.

"When I worked as a factory worker, if I worked overtime, I received the overtime pay. For an office job, there is no such thing. This is not an easy job, either."

When Gun-Ho stayed in the office working late, the general affairs manager sometimes came and annoyed Gun-Ho by saying, "Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, are you working overtime to show that you are a diligent and hard worker? Don't you know that the true hard worker is the one who goes home when it is time to go home?"

"Oh, I didn't mean that. I just need to finish the report before I go home."

"Let's not do that, okay? I'm leaving now."

Gun-Ho reviewed the past records using the accounting software including the records done by Manager Kim. He practiced input and output of data according to various account titles.

"This is the list of the current credit sales. Our company is dealing with over 40 entities. Mulpasaneop Corp. has gross sales over 500,000,000 won per month. The rest of the companies are just small fry; their gross sales are around 10,000,000 or 20,000,000 won."

One day, Gun-Ho asked Manager Kim about Mulpasaneop,

"We can say that the Mulpasaneop is feeding our company, right?"

"That's right. The rest of the companies have around 300,000,000 won in total per month."

"Their yearly gross sales are around 10,000,000,000 won in total."

"Sometimes more than that, and sometimes less than that. It changes."

"We can't lose Mulpasaneop, right?"

"Haha. You don't have to worry about it. Mulpasaneop CEO's wife is our president's sister."

"Oh, I see."

"It has been more than ten years already since they became our client. Mulpasaneop is a big company with more than 300 employees."

"Is it a KOSDAQ registered firm?"

"They tried last year but failed."

"I see. Oh, and I thought our company was related to the former president Young-Sam Kim since the name of the company is YS Tech. I didn't know our president's name is Young-Sik Park."

"Haha. Well, we do get that question a lot."

After a month of working, Gun-Ho became somewhat proficient at his job. It was a very windy day. Gun-Ho heard the president yelling from downstairs.

"Manager Kim, the president is reprimanding the workers in the field."

"He's doing it again. It has been quiet for a while."

"Does the president often reprimand workers like that? He seems to be gentle."

"He doesn't do that to us. But for the workers in the field, he sometimes kicks their shins if they make mistakes."

"Really?"

"But, that's just how it is. He doesn't linger on the incidents. Who would stay in the company if a president lingers on every mistake a worker makes?"

"That's another side of him that I didn't know..."

Gun-Ho pretended to go to the bathroom to see what was going on downstairs. The president was yelling fiercely at the group of five people: the production team's supervisors, manager, and team leader. When the president got furious, he spoke a dialect. He seemed to be from Jeolla Province. His handsome face contrasted with his harsh words.

"Are you going to keep working like this? What are you going to do with this mountain of claims? You, production manager! You speak!"

"Oww! Oww!"

The production manager screamed while holding his ankle; the president

probably kicked his shin.

"You as*holes! You are doing this because I have been quiet lately? Did you lose your mind? How can you not verify the drawing sheet provided by our supplier before you proceed? You, production team leader! You speak!"

"I am, I am so sorry."

"F*ck, it makes me go nuts. What am I going to do with all this stuff!"

The president threw the product he was holding to the floor and got in his car.

"Sh*t! What am I going to tell the supplier."

"We, we are so sorry."

Those five people all bowed together in apology. Gun-Ho could see the products that seemed to be returned. The president had every reason to be upset.

Gun-Ho went up to the second floor and asked Manager Kim, "What should we do if all those products are returned and claims are filed?"

"The note receivable just needs to be written down. We already issued their tax invoices,"

Manager Kim answered like it was no big deal.

28 Chapter 28. B2B Electronic Payment 2

It had been two months since Gun-Ho joined the YS Tech.

Heavy rain was falling in a windy day, and summer heat was fading away.

Gun-Ho was working till late at night.

"Now I know by heart many of the account numbers from the chart of accounts. That allows me to work faster in entering the data."

At that day, the general affairs manager was working late as well.

"You must be very busy today."

"Don't get me started. Tomorrow is payday. I have to calculate the Four Major Public Insurance. There seems to be a lot of overtime work and overtime payment among production line workers, which I have to factor in to calculate their wages."

"You do have indeed lots of work to do."

When Gun-Ho almost finished his work, he went to see the general affairs manager.

"Sir, please just let me know if you need a hand."

"You mean it? Then would you help me with the wage calculation for the office workers? I will do the calculation for the production line workers."

"Sure. I will do it quick since I won't get paid until all the wage calculation is done."

Working together increased work efficiency. It could well take two hours, but they finished it in an hour.

"Thank you Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. With your help, I have finished it faster. Tomorrow you will be busy in distributing wages to every single employee since it's payday. It will take significant time."

"Distributing actual wages is handled by Manager Kim."

"You said you were staying in Dujeong Town, Cheonan City, right?"

"Yes, I haven't found any room in Dunpo Town yet."

"There are plenty of rooms in Dunpo Town. For drinking and having fun, Dujeong Town is the place."

"Don't you live in Dujeong Town as well?"

"That's right. I live in Dujeong Town, at the Prugio condo next to the subway station."

"Oh, that's a nice place."

"Would you like to have a beer with me in our town, Dujeong? It's raining; perfect weather for a drink."

"I am treating you."

"Okay, then leave your car at home and come to the Dujeong station intersection. I will see you in front of the Kookmin Bank there."

"Okay. I will be there right away."

The general affairs manager Hwang and Gun-Ho met at a bar in Dujeong Town.

"I am sorry. I should already have arranged this kind of occasion to get closer with you."

"No problem. Let's drink up first."

The heavy rain continued outside. The neon lights were shining on the main street in Dujeong Town, Cheonan City even late at night.

"When does Manager Kim begin her maternity leave?"

"Well, I guess it would be next month."

"I hope that woman go home as soon as possible. I don't understand why she gives me the work she is supposed to do."

"Probably because she has a heavy workload in the accounting team. Please understand her."

"I didn't like the way she filled the vacant position this time, either. There were many competitive applicants for the bookkeeper position. I am sorry to tell you this, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo."

"I've heard of it."

"The president wanted to hire the one who had worked as a bookkeeper in a fodder company. She had a level-1 computerized accounting certificate and she studied in Japan; she speaks Japanese. Moreover, she was very pretty."

"I've heard that she decided to stay with her current employer..."

"Staying with the current employer my as*. That Manager Kim b*tch lied in order to keep her position firm."

"You don't say..."

"She then recommended the young lady who had just graduated from a commercial high school; she thought she could easily handle that kid. The president rejected the suggestion. He thought that candidate was too young to handle the work by herself during Manager Kim's absence for the maternity leave."

"I see."

"That's how she came up with you, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. You have some work experience in bookkeeping, and you are way younger than Manager Kim. In addition, once she returns from her maternity leave, you could move to another team such as sales or distribution since you do have work experience in production and you have a Class 1 driver's license."

"Hmm... I see."

"Our president is not a meticulous type of person. He heavily relies on Manager Kim moneywise. Manager Kim manages all bankbooks from our major banks and OTP as well. Usually, business finance is directly handled by a president for a small and mid-sized company. That's why that b*tch is condescending and looks down on everyone."

"That's because the president trusts her, isn't it?"

"When she has to pay for the credit purchase, she pays quick to the companies she likes, but for her unfavorable companies, she delays the payment for three to four months."

"That's unbelievable. The payment is probably processed according to the company's financial situation."

"She always delays the payments for the copy machine lease, office supplies, and food supplies for our cafeteria because our team, the general affairs team, handles them. That f*cking b*tch."

"Haha. You seemed to be drunk, sir."

"Mr. Goo, when Manager Kim leaves for her maternity leave, you make sure that she properly hands over the finance management access to you. In working in the accounting team, journalizing, filing tax return, and making a financial report on closing accounts are, of course, important. However, the most important thing is that you have to have the control on the finance."

"Okay, sir. Or brother. I will keep that in mind."

"Gun-Ho, when you first joined our company, you didn't like me because you thought I bothered you a lot, did you?"

"No, not at all, brother."

"You don't have to lie. I know that."

"You drank 1500CC already. Your wife must be waiting for you."

"Nah, she is still at work. She is working a night shift today. That is what I hate about the nurse job at a university hospital."

"Wow. A nurse working in a university hospital is one of the best jobs. I am envious."

It has been three months since Gun-Ho joined the company.

Manager Kim's belly looked like a mountain; it was almost time for her to just rest at home. The president was passing the area where Manager Kim and Gun-Ho were working when he talked to Manager Kim.

"Manager Kim. I do appreciate your hard work, but you need to get some rest. Why don't you just hand over the work to Mr. Goo and go home?"

"Let me file the VAT return, and then I will begin my maternity leave."

"I am worried about you, Manager Kim. It seems the baby is coming out anytime soon."

Manager Kim started handing over the work to Gun-Ho.

"You can continue to enter the accounting transaction in the general journal using the accounting software as you have done so far. In case you have any questions, just send me a text or you can contact Manager Jeong at the accountant office."

"Okay, I will do that."

"Here is the petty cash. It's a small amount of cash for small expenses, about 1,000,000 won. When you have to use it, make sure that you collect the receipts."

"Sure, of course."

"When an employee brings a cash payment statement for even a small amount, tell them to get a signature from their team leaders. If the amount is more than 100,000 won, they need to get the president's signature. We just give the signed amount; we don't authorize any expense."

"I understood."

"And, as to the B2B payment for the credit sales and the credit purchase of raw

materials, I will talk with the president and let you know."

"Do we apply the early payment discount to a B2B payment as soon as we receive it?"

"No, you don't have to. There is a service fee, so you can do it right before we have to pay... Let me talk with the president first about it and will let you know."

"Okay."

Manager Kim seemed to give a lot of thought to how to handle the finance management access.

29 Chapter 29. B2B Electronic Payment 3

An individual uses an OTP (One Time Password) card to generate a single-use password in transferring funds through a bank. An incorporated business uses a battery-powered device, TIME OTP instead, for the same purpose.

Manager Kim in the YS Tech Corporation went to the president's office carrying the TIME OTP and her maternity leave request form with her; her baby due date was around the corner.

"What is it?"

"This is my maternity leave request form."

The president took it with a smile.

"I requested 45 days of leave."

"Is the 45 day for a maternity leave the period guaranteed by labor law? Why don't you take more?"

"That's okay. Our grandmothers went back to work in a farm right after giving a birth to a baby; that's what I heard."

"That was a long time ago. Anyway, even though the labor law guaranteed only 45 days, you can use more if you need."

"And, this is..."

"Is that OTP?"

"I think it's better for you to start handling the finance by yourself, sir"

"Hmmm..."

"A small amount like the petty cash can be handled by Mr. Gun-Ho Goo."

However, for a large amount of funds such as B2B discount, payments for raw materials, and wages, I believe it is better that you, the president, handle it."

"That's why you brought the OTP of our major banks to me, for me to hold it."

"Why don't you keep it and let Mr. Gun-Ho Goo use it whenever it is necessary to make payments. It's not like I don't trust him or anything like that; it is just that he's still new..."

"Hmm... it could be tiresome to me."

The president didn't feel comfortable giving full access of the company finance to Gun-Ho; at the same time, he also felt tiresome to do it himself.

"Does Mr. Gun-Ho Goo know the receiving payment dates for each client and how to apply the B2B discount for them?"

"I will make sure that he knows them. It's not difficult."

"Hmm..."

The president leaned back in his chair and thought for a moment.

"We are getting B2B payments through the Industrial Bank of Korea. What other banks do we receive B2B payments from?"

"Shinhan Bank, Kookmin Bank, and Woori Bank. We receive B2B from these three additional banks."

"Okay then, give me the OTP for the Industrial Bank of Korea from which we receive the B2B payments of our major client, Mulpasaneop Corp. For other banks' OTP, you can give them to Mr. Gun-Ho Goo and let him know that he should keep them only during your absence for maternity leave."

"I understood. On the 25th, the payday, we need to apply the early payment discount on Mulpasaneup B2B."

"I got it."

The president took the OTP of the Industrial Bank of Korea and placed it in his

desk drawer.

"And, you take care of yourself, Manager Kim."

"Thank you, sir."

Manager Kim bowed to the president and left the president's office.

When Manager Kim came back to her desk, she asked Gun-Ho to come see her.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, I am leaving today and not coming back tomorrow. I just handed in my maternity leave request to the president.

"Oh, tomorrow? Wow, so I have to handle all these work by myself."

"I will be on leave for 45 days. That is the minimum I could use under the labor law."

"For 45 days, I have to manage everything by myself... I am worried since there are things I still have to learn."

"This is the list of receiving payment dates for each client."

"The dates are all different for each client. The banks we are receiving the payments through are all different for each client as well."

"These are the TIME OTP for banks. If you push the button, a password will be produced."

"There are three of them."

"The OTP for our major bank, Industrial Bank of Korea, is with the president. These are for Shinhan bank, Kookmin bank, and Woori bank. The name of the bank is written on each OTP."

"Okay."

"You haven't done B2B early payment discount, have you? We just received 15,000,000 won from Seongil Industry today. The Internet Banking Service Certificate is stored in my computer. So when you need to make a payment, use my computer."

"Okay, I will do that."

"Why don't you come and sit in my chair?"

Gun-Ho sat on her chair. Her seat cushion looked very girly with a colorful floral pattern.

"Open the Shinhan Bank website. It is bookmarked."

Gun-Ho opened the Shinhan Bank website and logged in by entering the Internet Banking Service Certificate code as instructed by Manager Kim.

"On the top left, you will see B2B Electronic Payment. Click on it."

"Done."

"Then click on Sales Company."

"Done."

"Then click on Credit Sales and get into the Note Receivable."

"Done."

"Set the period for viewing to include today's date. Do you see the funds from Seongil Industry?"

"Oh, yes, I see it."

"The expiration date is until three months later, right? Go back and check the current account balance."

"Yes, for now... the balance is 12,000,000 won."

"As you did earlier, get into the B2B and view the accounts receivable. Then apply the early payment discount on the funds received by Seongil Industry."

"Like this? Aha, the discount is applied."

"Check the balance."

"It was 12,000,000 won... Ahh, now it is 26,850,000!"

"We received 15,000,000 won from Seongil Industry, but that is the amount we can get if we receive after three months. Since we applied the early payment discount, the bank charged 150,000 won for their service fee. That's why we actually received only 14,800,000 won."

"Ahh... I see."

"Okay, now, this is the list of the credit purchase payment dates for each client. We have to pay to Tier Chemical today. The amount is 18,000,000 won. Send the amount."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho tried to send the amount to Tier Chemical while fumbling.

"That was Woori Bank OTP, not Shinhan OTP."

"Oh, that's right!"

"Please be careful."

"I just sent it."

"Now, log out from the bank account, turn off the computer, and go back to your desk. Enter the receipt and payment we just made into the accounting program."

Gun-Ho went back to his desk and log into the Douzone software.

"I actually wrote down in my note what you did last time. So, I put 150,000 won as the discount loss for the note receivable and 14,850,000 won as cash received on the debit column. On the credit column, I put 15,000,000 won as note receivable from Seongil Industry... Like this?"

"That's correct. And go ahead journalize the credit purchase payment for Tier Chemical and enter it into the accounting program. Don't forget to include the wire transfer fee."

"Okay."

"Then print out the account payable/account receivable, and attach the corresponding bank statement with glue to the back. You take it to the president tomorrow morning and get his approval."

"I will do that."

"On the pay day, the 25th, we will have to process a large amount of funds. You need to get the Industrial Bank of Korea OTP from the president before you can actually execute the payments. Once you are done, give the Industrial Bank of Korea OTP back to the president."

"I understood."

"Now, it has been three months since you joined our company. You know how to cook lo mein. Hahaha."

Manager Kim gave Gun-Ho a broad smile.

"I wouldn't have been able to do it without you, ma'am. Just like a dog that spent three months in a restaurant could cook lo mein. Haha."

"Okay, then I will leave now. I trust you on the work."

"I will text you if I have any questions. Take care of yourself."

Gun-Ho started working alone in the accounting team. He didn't realize until now how hectic the work in the accounting team could get. There were way more tedious tasks in this job than physical labor job in a factory. Managing the source documents itself took a lot of time. He had to work until late at night every day. He once received a phone call from a company.

"This is Sangwon Trade. The payment due date has passed. Why aren't you sending the payment yet?"

"Sangwon Trade? Oh, okay. I will send the payment right away."

"Is this because Manager Kim is not there? This kind of things has never happened before."

"I am so sorry."

The president often called Gun-Ho in as well.

"Did we receive the payment from A Tech?"

"Oh, A Tech? Uhh... I will check."

A frown appeared on the president's face.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo! Why did you bring these source documents now? I was supposed to receive them several days ago."

"I am so sorry."

Gun-Ho had been sweating over the workload every day. Through accumulation of experience, however, he gradually became proficient at his work.

30 Chapter 30. B2B Electronic Payment 4

Ten days had passed since Gun-Ho handled the work by himself in the accounting team.

Time truly cures all things. He didn't feel any difficulty handling B2B payment discount; he just needed to get the knack of it. However, he had to work till late at night every day because of the heavy workload in managing source documents and data entry into the accounting program.

Gun-Ho received a call from Jong-Suk; it has been a while.

"Bro, it's me."

"Hey, Jong-Suk. How have you been?"

"Bro, how's your work in accounting? You achieved career advancement since you no longer work in a factory but work in an office."

"Don't get me started. I work till late at night every single day."

"You don't get paid for overtime because it is an office job."

"Nothing much I can do about it. I have to stay at work until I finish the work."

"Did you get a raise?"

"Same. 180."

Jong-Suk chuckled. "I got a raise because now I do welding and handle some machines, too."

"How much?"

"2,000,000 won."

"Really? I should have stayed as a factory worker."

"No, I am not a factory worker. I am a welder. I do have the nationally recognized certificate for welding."

"You made a better choice than me. Do your parents still ask you to be a police officer?"

"They don't anymore. When my dad was in the hospital, I gave my parents 4,000,000 won that I saved. They were very happy."

"I see. You are a good son."

"Nah."

"The manager I'm working with is on her maternity leave right now. So I have to do all the accounting work by myself; it is really a lot of work."

"An office job looks nice, but maybe it isn't."

"An office job is hard. Maybe I shouldn't have listened to the Cheongdam Town Chairman Lee and studied accounting."

"You probably can't go fishing anymore since you live far."

"Yes, I can. If I take the highway, it only takes two and a half hours to go to the Pocheon fishing site. I will let you know once I become less busy."

"Sounds good."

"Okay. I will talk to you later then."

"Bye."

Gun-Ho checked the payment status of the entities for credit sales every day to see if they pay on time. It was one of the work Manager Kim handed over to Gun-Ho when she left. If a company didn't pay on time, Gun-Ho would call a staff in their accounting team to demand the payment. Most of the companies among 40 entities made payments through B2B, and five of them would send the payment via electronic promissory note.

"Manager Kim said that an early payment discount is applicable to an electronic promissory note even in a private loan market. Let me call the hard money lender that Manager Kim mentioned."

An electronic promissory note, not a B2B, can be transferred to a private money lender. The lenders deduct their fee of the total payment amount promised and the vendor receives the discounted amount after subtracting the fee. The company Gun-Ho was working for didn't have many electronic promissory notes, and the amount of payments was relatively small. Gun-Ho once received a call from a private money lender.

"Mr. Goo? Hi. I am calling to talk to you about the service we provide. We do take electronic promissory notes and we charge less than other money lenders. Why don't you sell your notes to us?"

Two of the companies for credit sales were very small companies. They were still issuing paper promissory notes. One of them issued a 2,000,000 won paper promissory note, and the other company issued a 3,000,000 won note.

"Paper promissory notes are troublesome. In order to receive them, I have to go to their office."

When Gun-Ho had to make payments to client companies, he applied either a B2B discount or an electronic promissory note discount. Sometimes, he even had to ask the president to use the TIME OTP that the president was keeping in his office because he had to pay through the Industrial Bank of Korea. The major client company, Mulpasaneop, was not the only company that used the Industrial Bank of Korea for B2B payment; there were ten other small companies which used the service from the same bank.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from the Korea Electric Power Corporation ("KEPCO"); the payment due date for electricity had passed.

"You have an outstanding balance on your account with us; the amount to be paid is 12,000,000 won. If you don't pay it by today, there will be a late fee."

Gun-Ho verified the current balances of all three banks: Shinhan, Kookmin, and Woori. There were not enough funds to pay the electricity bill. He had to use the funds received in the Industrial Bank of Korea after applying the B2B discount.

"Let me ask the president for its OTP."

Gun-Ho knocked on the president's office door. The president was dozing off in his chair and the knocking woke him up. It was right after lunchtime.

"What is it?"

"I need to do B2B discount on the funds received in the Industrial Bank of Korea so we could pay the electricity bill."

The president handed over the OTP to Gun-Ho while smacking his lips. He said while feeling annoyed, "Keep it with you from now on. It's really annoying to hand it over to you every time you need to use it; it's too often. Take it!"

The president tossed the TIME OTP of the Industrial Bank of Korea to Gun-Ho.

"Do you really want me to keep it for you?"

"Yeah. So you don't have to knock on my door that often. It's annoying for both of us, right?"

"I understood."

Gun-Ho took the TIME OTP from the president and came back to his desk. He was going to keep it until Manager Kim comes back from her maternity leave.

It has been two weeks since Gun-Ho started working alone in the accounting team. Gun-Ho received a call from his married older sister.

"Gun-Ho? Do you have money by chance?"

"No, why?"

"My landlord asked us to vacate the apartment. I seriously need money. I have to find another apartment to move to, but I can't find any with the money in my hand around here. Can you lend me 5,000,000 won? I will pay you the interest."

"I have no money. I am barely making a living."

"You have been working for over four years. You couldn't even save 5,000,000 won?"

"My pay is really low. It's hard to save any."

"That's because you spend too much on drinking."

"If so, why did your husband fail to save enough money?"

"Driving a truck doesn't pay much. We were barely able to send Jung-Ah to kindergarten. Whew, where should we move to then?"

"I am sorry, I really want to help you, but I really don't have money."

"Okay. I am the bad sister who is asking money from a little brother."

"Don't say that."

"I got it. Hang up!"

Gun-Ho's sister hung up the phone, feeling irritated.

"She must be serious about the money since she called me. But what can I do?"

Gun-Ho felt bad, but there was nothing he could do about it. Three days later, Gun-Ho was about to go home from his work when he received a call from his mom; she sounded troubled.

"Gun-Ho, we need you to come Incheon right away. Your dad collapsed, and the ambulance took him."

"What? What's wrong?"

"I don't know. I have no money to pay for his medical bill. What are we going to do?"

Gun-Ho's mother was about to cry.

"Okay, mom. I am on my way. Sh*t!"

Gun-Ho was annoyed. He headed to Incheon.

Gun-Ho arrived at the Gil Medical Center in Incheon. His mother and sister were already there.

"What happened?"

"Your dad had an X-ray and is getting MRI right now."

"What did the doctor say?"

"Nothing yet. His doctor is coming."

"Who is with the patient? Is his son here?"

Gun-Ho went closer to the doctor.

"I am the son."

"Come with me please."

"How is he?"

"It's a heart attack. An artery supplying heart muscle is blocked by a blood clot. His heart muscle is damaged."

"What's going to happen then?"

"He has to stay in the hospital. His heart muscle can die any time as it doesn't get enough oxygen due to low cardiac output. He could get a sudden fall in blood pressure, and it really is dangerous."

"I understood. I will have him admitted to the hospital."

Gun-Ho was worried and anxious.

"Once he stays in the hospital, his medical bill will be really high. How much should I expect? I only have 1,200,000 won."

Gun-Ho went outside of the hospital and started smoking.

31 Chapter 31. B2B Electronic Payment 5

Gun-Ho withdrew 1,000,000 won from the ATM inside the hospital.

"Mom, here is 1,000,000 won. Keep it for now."

"What's this for?"

"We have to wait and see the test result before we know anything about his treatment like if an operation is needed. However, you might need the money to pay the security deposit for his hospitalization."

Gun-Ho's sister said while standing next to her mother,

"1,000,000 won is far from enough. Whew, I spent all my money for my recent moving. What are we going to do?"

Gun-Ho looked up the ceiling in the hospital lobby for a moment and then looked at his mother's face. He could see the wrinkles on her face; her eyes were filled with tears. He deeply felt sorry for her.

"Mom, I gotta go. I have to go to work tomorrow in Asan. If you need anything, just call me."

"Okay. Go before it gets too late to leave. Be nice and show your respect to people at work."

It was already the middle of night. Gun-Ho had mixed feelings on the way home, Cheonan from Incheon.

"I had 1,200,000 won in total, and I gave 1,000,000 out of it to mom. That leaves me with 200,000 won. I have to live with 200,000 for a month."

Feeling of fear began to seize Gun-Ho.

"I should have gotten a credit card; it would have been useful. I only have a debit

card... Can I get a loan from a bank? I already have the sunshine loan and student loan. They won't lend me any more money because of my pre-existing loans. As my sister said, 1,000,000 won is way far from enough for dad's medical bill... Ahh! It drives me crazy!"

Gun-Ho screamed like an animal while holding the steering wheel.

Gun-Ho became quiet at work. He just worked without saying a word.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo!"

The president called him. Gun-Ho couldn't hear the president because he was lost in thought.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo!"

When the president shouted Gun-Ho's name again, Gun-Ho woke up to it and ran to the president's office. The president was with a guest in his office.

"What were you doing? I've been calling you!"

"I am sorry. I was on the phone and couldn't hear you."

"Say hello to him. This is the branch manager of the Industrial Bank of Korea."

The branch manager offered his hand for a handshake while smiling.

"Hello, I am Gun-Ho Goo. Nice to meet you."

The president took a sip of green tea and said, "Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, can you bring the financial statements from last year?"

"Financial statements? Sure, I will be right back."

Gun-Ho went back to his desk and started looking for the financial statements from his shelf. It was a thick book.

"I am sure it was here..."

It was strange that he couldn't find the financial statements from the place it had always been. There was one from two years ago and one from three years ago,

but he couldn't find the one for the prior year, of all things. Gun-Ho could hear the president yelling.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo! What takes you so long? Please bring it right away!"

"Okay, okay."

Gun-Ho was flustered, and he finally found the last year's financial statements after a while. It was placed at the bottom of the shelf; it was weird that Gun-Ho didn't see it earlier. He ran to the president's office while carrying the statements with him.

"You should have placed it somewhere you can easily find. You can't take that long to find this kind of documents."

"I am so sorry."

The president said while leafing through the financial statements, "For the last year, our short-term debt didn't increase, did it?"

"Huh? Oh, no, no, it didn't"

Gun-Ho didn't actually know whether the short-term debt increased or decreased. He had gone through the statements once, but he didn't really pay attention to it. He just answered "no," and felt worried. The president gestured.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. You can leave us now."

"Oh, okay, okay."

Gun-Ho left the president's office after giving a 90-degree bow to the president and the branch manager.

Gun-Ho took a copy of last year's financial statements to verify the short-term debt from the storage room. It actually increased compared to two years ago.

"Whew, the president would say something later about this."

Gun-Ho walked out of the storage room while carrying a copy of the financial statements. He wanted to carefully look through it once he got home.

After he came to his desk Gun-Ho sat in his chair absent-mindedly.

He was not sure about his father's test result and how much medical bill he had to expect. He was also worried if the president would reprimand him after the branch manager leaves. At that moment, he received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro, let's go fishing the day after tomorrow; it's Sunday!"

"To Pocheon?"

"You said it only takes two and half hours from your end. I will bring soju and a roasted chicken. You just bring your own body."

Gun-Ho was stressed a lot these days both at work and at home; he wanted to get some fresh air.

"Okay, let's go! F*ck."

"Why do you say 'f*ck' in going fishing?"

"There is something you don't know."

"Something must be going on. Come and get fresh air. You need to refresh yourself!"

It has been a while since Gun-Ho headed to the Pocheon fishing site.

"Our country, Korea has the great roads even though its people are having a hard time living in it."

Gun-Ho met Jong-Suk at the fishing site. He was really happy to see Jong-Suk.

"Hey, it has been a while. I am truly happy to see you. Uh? You gained some weight."

"I ate too much pork belly because factory often has dinner gatherings. You seem to have lost some weight, bro."

"My life has been hard, I guess."

"Uh? Look at that. The Cheongdam Town Chairman Lee is here. Wow, I didn't

expect to see him again. That Manager Gweon who is assisting Chairman Lee is here, too."

"Chairman Lee, how are you?"

"Oh, young men. I am glad to see both of you. How have you been? I come here from time to time. It seems you didn't come here for quite a while."

"Yes, I am still working in Yangju, but my bro is now working in Asan."

"Asan? You are far from here. So do you still work in a plastic factory?"

"He is working in an accounting department. He already acquired the accounting certificate."

"Oh, really? A ShinWangJaeWang fate actually started being exposed to the accounting. So how is it?"

"I think I should have stayed as a factory worker. I had to often work till late at night, and I didn't even get a raise."

"Hahaha. The ShinWangJaeWang fate is well paying its lesson fee to GiShinDaeWoon."

"Huh?"

"No, I am just talking to myself."

"A fate thing, that's a sham. The Master Park from the Jinyeo Philosophy Hall told me that I would be a rich man after five years. Almost two years already passed from that day. I feel like I am financially suffering more."

"Hahaha, is that right?"

Gun-Ho recalled Master Park's face; he sure looked like a top con artist. He just pretended to know everything and took people's pocket money just like that—he seemed to be an evil man.

At that moment, there was a big thumping noise. Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon stood up and looked in the direction of the sound.

"It seems like they are demolishing the barn across the street with an excavator. Whew, I could see the dust even from the distance. It will generate tons of construction waste."

"Fish will run away because of that noise."

Chairman Lee said while casting the fishing rod into the water again.

"There are lots of construction wastes these days. Even on the way to this fishing site, I saw a pile of construction waste on the entrance of the asphalt-paved road leading to the site. I had to drive on the edge of the road to avoid it."

"Hmm... construction waste... there is someone who made money out of that waste."

"What? That waste has value?"

Manager Gweon's eyes widened as he looked at the Chairman Lee.

32 Chapter 32. Seed Money Soaked With Tears 1

While gazing at the fishing float on the water, Chairman Lee said, "Don't underestimate construction wastes because they seem useless. There is someone who made big money out of it."

"Really?"

"It's a company called InsunENT. The owner is a high school graduate and a very successful man. He grew his company to a KOSDAQ registered firm with construction waste disposal business only; isn't it amazing?"

"It became a KOSDAQ registered company with a construction waste disposal service? Wow. That waste can be indeed lucrative."

"Rebuilding a condo or building a new town produces a lot of construction waste. Then, the construction waste management company gets busy."

"The stocks of InsunENT will go up as well."

"The prices of stocks fluctuate; so, I don't know. However, InsunENT is a new KOSDAQ registered company and it is not reached by stock market manipulators yet; so, their stock price will go up, I guess."

Gun-Ho listened to Chairman Lee with a lot of interest when Chairman Lee talked about stocks. The topic intrigued him because of his experience of losing all of his money saved up in Hwaseong at that time, in addition to his sunshine loan in stocks.

"Do you invest in stocks too?"

Chairman Lee responded to Gun-Ho's question with a smile.

"No, I don't because you can't figure out the other player's cards. Moreover, if you make money in stocks, the pleasure lasts for three days while the sadness of

losing money in stocks lasts for over seven days according to some psychologists. That's why I don't do stocks. Oh, I've got a bite!"

Chairman Lee lifted his fishing net; there was one flapping carp.

After the fishing, Gun-Ho had a good time with Jong-Suk. They were sitting on the grass beside the lake while having a roasted chicken with soju. He wasn't jealous of anybody, even for a king at this moment.

"I'd better get going. I have a long way to drive."

"Will there be heavy traffic since it is Sunday?"

"Usually, traffic is heavy on Saturdays; Sunday should be okay."

"Safe trip, bro."

"Okay. I've been feeling down lately because of new work in accounting and worries within my family. I feel better now after having a good time with you here. Thank you. I will see you soon."

Gun-Ho felt much better while driving home. He was listening to IU song when his car engine stopped. He was driving on the expressway just passing by Anseong and almost getting to the North-Cheonan IC.

"Did the drive belt break? I've never had this problem with this car before. The engine just stopped. Sh*t!"

After Gun-Ho called his auto insurance company, he moved his car to the side of the road and had waited for over thirty minutes until someone from the insurance company arrived. They opened the car hood.

"It seems to be a long time since you had your car checked."

"Yes, I've been busy..."

"Oh, hmmm. The timing gear failed. The car needs to be towed."

"What? It has to be towed?"

Gun-Ho was stunned. He only had 200,000 won in hand. His next payday was

far away.

A tow truck arrived, and it dragged Gun-Ho's old Avante to the Seonghwan Town to an auto repair shop there. An auto mechanic came out and started checking on Gun-Ho's car here and there.

"Hmm. The timing gear failed. You should have changed it already."

"Timing gear? How much do you think it will cost me?"

"Well, I need to look further to be sure but I would say around 300,000 to 400,000 won."

"400,000 won?"

Gun-Ho became devastated.

"How long do you think will it take to repair?"

"You can leave the car here today and pick it up tomorrow evening. Give me your business card, then I will call you once the repair is complete."

"Whew..."

Gun-Ho gave a deep sigh.

"It is really a good thing that this didn't cause any accident. You don't have to worry about the repair. I will completely replace it."

Gun-Ho gave the mechanic his business card and then staggered out of the auto repair shop. He waited for a bus to Dujeong Town at the bus station. The bus didn't come—it was dark, and it started raining. Gun-Ho became soaking wet and looked like a drowned rat.

"Sh*t! Why hasn't the bus come yet?"

Unlike Seoul, a bus didn't run often in provinces. After waiting for thirty minutes, Gun-Ho decided to just grab a taxi.

Fortunately, Dujeong Town in Cheonan from Seonghwan Town, where his room was located was not very distant. Gun-Ho didn't have to pay a lot for taxi fare as

he initially expected. When he entered his tiny room in the OneRoomTel, he found a mail.

"What is this?"

It was a notice of seizure from the City Hall for his car. It said since Gun-Ho didn't pay his auto tax, the city would seize his car. Gun-Ho collapsed into his chair.

"It's not just the cost that I'm worried about. How am I going to work tomorrow? I have no idea about bus routes in this area... Will it be easy to find a taxi? How much should I expect to pay for the taxi fare to Dunpo to my work?"

"Aaaaah!"

Gun-Ho pulled out his own hair.

"Tomorrow, we are getting B2B payment from Mulpasaneop. I have to bring the report of deposits and withdrawals to the president."

Gun-Ho was about to go crazy. He washed his feet, then brushed his teeth, and laid down on his bed; but, he couldn't sleep. He went out in his flip-flops to buy a soju and Saewookkang (a Korea shrimp-flavored snack).

"I am so hopeless. It seems like the world is against me! For car repairing, let's spend some of the petty cash from work for now. I can fill it in once I get paid next month."

When Gun-Ho thought about this, he received a call from his sister. A phone call from a family member at late night was usually about bad news rather than good news. Gun-Ho felt nervous when he answered the phone.

"Gun-Ho? Dad's surgery date is scheduled. It's the day after tomorrow."

"Is it? So it cost, huh?"

"Big problem. The surgery costs about 2,000,000 won. However, his medical insurance doesn't cover the surgery, and it makes the total medical cost more than 6,000,000 won. What are we gonna do?"

"Why doesn't his insurance cover the surgery?"

"Mom hadn't paid for the insurance for a while before she started working in the nursing home; the outstanding balance for the insurance is 2,400,000 won now. Unless we pay that amount, they said they wouldn't apply the medical insurance to his surgery. What did you do? You should have added them as dependents to your insurance provided at work!"

"How would I know that! I don't know, okay? I already gave 1,000,000 won to mom. You and mom figure out the rest!"

"Do something. Steal some money from somewhere! If dad doesn't get the surgery, we will have to pay more for his funeral."

"What did you do, sister?! You had saved some money before you got married. What did you do with that money?!"

"What about you? What did you do?!"

"F*ck! How come our parents are so poor! I even had to give up on the exam to become a level-9 government employee because of money!"

"They did their best. We both know that mom and dad had done everything they could!"

"All parents do what they could do. Sh*t. Why did they get married in the first place! I don't even expect to inherit any wealth from them, then they at least shouldn't ask their children to pay for their medical bill! This is unbelievable!"

"You shouldn't say that way. You will have to pay for what you said."

"Pay for what?"

"You, are you drunk? You as*hole!"

"What? F*cker!"

They raised their voices while they are fiercely arguing. The OneRoomTel owner ran to Gun-Ho's room to warn him.

"Go outside to talk on the phone. I am getting a lot of complaints from other residents here because you are too loud!"

"Okay!"

After getting off the phone with his sister, Gun-Ho drank all night. He kept drinking all night long while his face was all covered with tears and nasal discharge.

"Okay, that's right, let's do it!"

Gun-Ho came up with something which even he was surprised with. He bit his lip. He looked determined. He bit his lip so hard that his lip was bleeding out.

33 Chapter 33. Seed Money Soaked With Tears 2

Morning came, and Gun-Ho found himself lying down on his bed wearing the same clothes he had worn yesterday.

"I didn't brush my teeth last night. I didn't even take my socks off and fell asleep."

Several empty soju bottles were scattered here and there on his tiny room floor.

"It looks like an alcoholic's room."

Gun-Ho looked at the clock. It was half-past five.

"Oh, I don't have a car. I'd better take a shower now and leave for work early."

Gun-Ho cleaned his room roughly and took a shower. He went out to take a taxi without having breakfast.

"Dunpo, Shinbong Town!"

Gun-Ho arrived at work at 7 AM. No one was at work that early yet; the office was quiet. Gun-Ho turned on his computer as soon as he sat at his desk while clenching his jaw. He then opened the stock website, PaxNet.

"If I remember correctly, the name of the company Chairman Lee mentioned was InsunENT."

Sparks appeared in his eyes.

"Hmmm... their gross sales are over 100,000,000,000 won. Their financial statements look good. The founder is a high school graduate? Wow, he is indeed a successful man. Well, why not me!"

When Gun-Ho invested in stocks with the sunshine loan several years ago, he didn't consult financial statements. His investment in stocks was an investment

without knowledge or information. But now, he knew how to read and analyze financial statements; thanks to his work experience in accounting.

"Their stocks are undervalued. Stock market manipulators haven't touched their stocks yet. Since the number of trades is increasing, the manipulators started buying their stocks lately."

When Gun-Ho bit his lip, it bled out again; he must have bitten the same area of his lip that he had bitten yesterday.

Gun-Ho drafted the report of deposits and withdrawals. It was a report prepared by the accounting team to be handed out to the president every morning. The report usually included the current status of deposits and withdrawals on the previous day, the balance of each bank, and the status of promissory notes the company had.

"On Friday, we received the B2B payment of 520,000,000 won from our major client, Mulpasaneop Corp. through the Industrial Bank of Korea. We also received the B2B payment of 24,000,000 won from Bochang Industry through the Shinhan Bank."

Gun-Ho entered all data into Excel proficiently.

B2B (Business to Business) is an electronic commerce transaction between companies. Once a company issues a promissory note, a bank, as a middle man, takes the promissory note and pays the payee company after applying the early payment discount. Many companies often use this B2B system for transactions—dealing with a large amount of money.

The workers in the factory usually came to work at 8 AM. When the clock hits 8, workers started coming to work. The president usually came to work at 7:30 AM and walked around the work site in the factory, and then he walked up to the second floor where all offices were located. Many presidents of mid-size companies were morning persons.

"Good morning!"

When the president came to the office, the office workers stood up and gave a 90-degree bow to the president.

"Hmm, hmm. Uh? Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, you came to work early today."

Gun-Ho followed the president to his office carrying the report of deposits and withdrawals.

"Here is the report of deposits and withdrawals."

"You are so fast."

The president looked at the report thoroughly.

"The total balance from four banks is 6,400,000 won, and we received the B2B from Mulpasaneop of 520,000,000 won, and 24,000,000 won from Bochang Industry..."

"That's correct. I will get the discounted amount for the Bochang Industry payment and pay for the part of the credit purchase of raw materials with it. And for the Mulpasaneop payment, I will get the discounted payment on the 24th to pay the wages."

"Okay, we don't have to get all of the discounted payments right now since we have to pay for the fee accordingly."

"That's right. I will proceed then."

The president signed on the approval section of the report without a problem.

"Gun-Ho Goo! You did a good job!"

"Okay, I will do it."

Gun-Ho gave a 90-degree bow to the president before he could leave his office. Before Gun-Ho left the office, the president called Gun-Ho again.

"This is a wedding invitation. Please mail 200,000 won to the address shown on that invitation; I mean with my name."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho bowed respectfully to the president again and left his office while carrying the wedding invitation.

Gun-Ho went outside for a moment. He then let out a deep sigh while looking up the sky. He then fastened his belt. He looked resolute and determined just like a general before going to war when he came back to his desk. He opened the Industrial Bank of Korea website.

"I am borrowing the money for a few weeks. I will pay all back to the company!"

His eyes appeared bloodshot. Gun-Ho entered to view the account receivables and applied the early payment discount on Mulpasaneop's 520,000,000 won. It didn't take even a second for the 515,000,000 won cash to be transferred to the company bank account; the amount reflected the fee charged by the bank.

"Just for a few weeks."

Gun-Ho transferred all of 515,000,000 won into his personal bank account. An error message appeared immediately: 'transfer failure.'

"Oh, that's right. The outgoing transfer limit for the YS Tech bank account is 500,000,000 won."

Gun-Ho adjusted the amount to 500,000,000 won and tried the transfer again. This time a success message appeared.

"I will use the money until payday."

After the transfer, Gun-Ho continued concentrating on working with his computer. He looked around for a second. He then took out Hyundai Securities card from the back of his diary. He had made this card when he invested in stocks with sunshine loan a few years back.

"My bank account has 100,000,000 won outgoing transfer limit. Let's move 100,000,000 to my stock account in Hyundai Securities."

Gun-Ho looked around with bloodshot eyes.

"No one is looking. Let's download the speed online trading."

Gun-Ho logged in to the Hyundai Securities online stocks trading with the login ID and password he had written down in his diary.

"100,000,000 won just came in!"

Gun-Ho bought the InsunENT stocks with all of 100,000,000 won. In the afternoon that day, he went to the Dunpo post office; the general affairs manager took him to the post office with his car as a favor. Gun-Ho mailed the wedding gift money for the president there and stopped by his bank. He raised the outgoing transfer limit from 100,000,000 to 300,000,000 won.

"I will send 200,000,000 more to my Hyundai Securities stock account."

Gun-Ho purchased more of InsunENT stocks that day with 200,000,000 won.

"Well, I will see!"

When it was 3:30 in the afternoon, Gun-Ho checked the stock closing price; 1.5% down.

"B2B discount price is 5,000,000 won; stock loss is 4,500,000 won. F*ck! If I add the stock trading fee, I lost 10,000,000 won already. I lost half of my yearly salary in the blink of an eye today!"

It was weird though. Gun-Ho used to get irritated and upset when he had to spend even 100,000 won for his car repairing, but he felt calm now. Half of his yearly salary was gone, but he was calm.

Tuesday came around.

Gun-Ho transferred the remaining 200,000,000 to his stock account and bought more of InsunENT stocks even though its stock price went down, in order to reduce the average cost of stocks he invested. The total cost he invested in this stock was 500,000,000 won. After he purchased later at a lesser price, the estimated loss reduced from -1.5% to -0.65%.

"I have 20 days left until the payday. It is now up to God."

Gun-Ho would face his fate after 20 days—he could make money or he could go to prison. Gun-Ho quietly closed his eyes. He felt like he could hear something.

34 Seed Money Soaked With Tears 3

Gun-Ho invested 500 million won in the InsunENT stock out of the B2B payment of 515 million received from Mulpasaneop Corp. by the company. This was obviously an illegal act. Gun-Ho was suffering severe financial difficulties, and it was an act of deviation driven by his deep despair.

"I will pay right back to the company once I make money out of this investment."

Gun-Ho withdrew the remaining 15 million won of the Mulpasaneop's B2B payment in cash.

"It won't make any difference whether I take 500 million won or 515 million won."

Gun-Ho sent 4.5 million won from the 15 million cash withdrawal to his sister so she could pay for the father's surgery and also for the outstanding dues of his medical insurance. Once Gun-Ho sent a text message to his sister to let her know about the money he just sent, she called him right away.

"You, where did you get that money?"

"I stole it."

"What? Tell me the truth."

"You are the one who told me that I should even steal money from somewhere to pay for dad's surgery."

"It just came out of anger. Did you borrow from your company? Well, thank you, brother. I will let the hospital know so dad can have his surgery as scheduled."

"Okay. I gotta go; I am busy."

Gun-Ho used another 500,000 won from that cash withdrawal to fill in the company's petty cash; he used some of the petty cash to repair his car earlier.

"I have 10 million won left. I will invest all in the InsunENT stock."

All he could think of was real-time stock quotes. Gun-Ho stayed logged in the online stock trading website to see the current volumes of bid size and ask size of stocks. He kept the one-minute bar chart open on his computer.

"Mr. Goo, let me borrow the company credit card; I have to buy paint."

The maintenance team leader came to Gun-Ho to ask for the business credit card. Even then Gun-Ho couldn't take his eyes off the chart.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo! What are you looking at? Are you looking at the bar chart?"

"No, no. What did you just say? Did you say you needed the company credit card? What do you need it for?"

"Wake up. I just told you that I needed to buy paint."

"Oh, that's right. Paint. If the amount to spend is more than 100,000 won, you need to get the president's signature first."

Gun-Ho's face was telling that when his mind was somewhere else.

Stocks don't move in the direction investors wish to move. If you buy a stock, its price goes down. If you sell it, the price goes up. That's the way stocks work.

"Sh*t, it's down again 3% today. That makes my net account value 15 million won less. It must be the market manipulators behind the decrease of this stock's price. They are trying to make small investors sell their stocks."

InsunENT stock didn't send a lucky smile to Gun-Ho. Instead, its stock didn't plunge at least. The stock price moved up and down repeatedly within the -2% frame.

"It looks like the stock is confined in a box."

Gun-Ho became anxious as time went by. Gun-Ho could manage to empty his mind and relax in the beginning. However, as time went by, he was beginning to feel antsy and have a panic attack. He couldn't sleep at night and his lips became swollen consequently.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo! What happened to your lips? Did someone bite you?"

The general affairs manager made a joke out of Gun-Ho's swollen lips. The new female employee in the general affairs team also laughed along while covering her mouth. The president hired this female employee as a general affairs team member after Manager Kim in the accounting team went on maternity leave. The president thought there had to be someone who could serve tea when he had a guest in the company.

It has been five days since Gun-Ho invested in InsunENT stock.

"I've invested in this company because Chairman Lee spoke highly of their business. Did I overreact to what he said by investing in this company? Maybe he just said it without meaning anything."

Gun-Ho was continuously feeling antsy even after he went back to his room after work. He sometimes stayed up all night because he couldn't sleep. He even took sleeping pills.

"If I have to go to prison, at least my dad could survive because he had undergone surgery... Me, I will probably rot in prison for two years? Once I get out of prison, I will be 34 years old and wouldn't be able to find a job because of my criminal record. I will probably have to get a day worker job and eventually die as such."

Gun-Ho thought life was unfair. If there was God, he wanted to ask him why unfortunate things happened to him way more than others.

"What's done is done. I will empty my mind calmly and wait to see what happens."

Gun-Ho decided to stop checking stock prices daily.

The president usually read an economic newspaper in his office in the morning and he read two additional daily newspapers. After he finished reading the newspapers, the workers in the office read them in the afternoon. Gun-Ho was reading the economic newspaper that day when he found an article about construction waste.

"Construction waste should be handled by an authorized waste management

company."

The article talked about construction waste and proper handling of the waste due to their adverse impacts on the environment. It said the construction waste should be disposed of by an authorized waste disposal company.

"This is good. Let's check the InsunENT stock."

Its stock price went up to 3.5%.

"I've recovered from the early losses and I am now back to my original price!"

Gun-Ho's face was flushed with excitement. Since he came back to his initial price, he felt a bit emotionally stable. On the following day, Gun-Ho could see information and opinions about InsunENT on an online stock-trading community.

"InsunENT stocks are undervalued despite their good business performance. The stocks for investors to pay attention."

Opinions like this started appearing on the online stock community.

"It seems that rumors from Yeouido stock street began to spread."

The stock price started going up; 6% up already. 12% up on the following day, and it went down a bit and closed at 8%. Gun-Ho initially purchased the stocks for 510 million won. Now it was worth 580 million won.

"Nice! I made 70 million won. "

Gun-Ho was excited.

"Let's place the order to sell the stock!"

Gun-Ho's hands were shaking.

"No, no, I still have more than ten days until the payday. I have to take big risks in order to win big. Let's wait for a few more days."

Bottom-priced stock can bounce hard and once the momentum gets behind the stock, its price goes up rapidly. This time, the InsunENT released an official

news announcement.

"InsunENT signed a 15 billion won contract with A Corp. for construction waste disposal."

The next day, its stock price increased 4% more. Gun-Ho's net account value also increased to 600 million won.

"I have to sell now. If the stock plunges I could be stuck!"

Gun-Ho was about to place an order to sell the stock when the president called him in.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, the branch manager from the Industrial Bank of Korea is requesting a copy of our financial statements. Will you take it to them now?"

"Right now?"

It spoiled his excitement. Gun-Ho had to go to the Industrial Bank of Korea without being able to place the stock selling order. When he returned to the office, the stock market closed already.

"Whew, I really wanted to sell them today."

The following day, the stock price dropped by 6%; it was strange. Gun-Ho's net account value also went down to 560 million won.

"I should have sold them yesterday."

"I thought I would make 90 million won. Well, I should be happy with this 50 million earnings."

When Gun-Ho opened the stock trading website to place the selling order, he was stunned by the real-time stock quotes. As the trading volume dramatically increased, the price of the stock moved from -6% to 10%.

Gun-Ho opened tick charts. The size of the bar was growing, penetrating the ceiling.

"Let's wait until the market closes!"

Gun-Ho stopped doing his accounting work and kept staring at the computer screen until 3 PM. As Gun-Ho didn't even budge while sitting at his desk, the new female worker from the general affairs team talked to him.

"You are so into your work."

Gun-Ho still didn't take his eyes off the computer screen.

"The market closed with the HOD (High of Day)! The closing price is the highest price. There is still a high volume of buyers stacked up with this closing price!"

"My net account value is now 780 million won!"

Gun-Ho initially invested 510 million won and now the stock value was worth 780 million won. He gained 270 million won at a breath.

"I'm going to have an extravagant dinner tonight."

That day, Gun-Ho had a very expensive dinner in a very expensive Japanese restaurant in Dujong Town.

The increase in the stock price continued the next day. Gun-Ho's net account value reached 1 billion won already.

"I heard there was an earthquake in Pohang City today. Will it impact on the stock market?"

Gun-Ho opened the stock discussion forum.

"The earthquake produced more construction waste. It will raise the stock price! Well, the stock is blowing up! Fasten your seatbelt!"

Opinions and comments of forum members were pouring into the forum.

Gun-Ho sold all of his stocks in InsunENT the next morning when there was a red light. It was five days before the payday.

"My net account value is now 1,045 million won. After I return 515 million won to the company, I will still have 530 million won."

Tears were flowing from Gun-Ho's eyes.

* About Insun Ent Co., Ltd.

InsunENT is a construction waste disposal company. It was KOSDAQ registered in 2002.

Its gross sales were 135.5 billion won, and its headquarter is located in Goyang City in Ilsan District. (The company can be searched on the Internet)

The founder of InsunENT is Jong-Taek Oh. He graduated from Gimje High School in Jeollabuk Province. After graduating high school, he moved to Seoul and worked for a subcontracting company of a construction equipment company. When he was retired, he purchased a heavy equipment with 6 million won and opened the InsunENT.

The price of InsunENT stock actually increased significantly in 2007 from 3,000 won to 9,000 won.

The story of our main character, Gun-Ho Goo buying the InsunENT stock is not based on the true story. It is fiction.

The reason I used the real company, InsunENT in this novel is because of its founder who is a high school graduate, but a very successful man. It was just to add fun to the novel. Thank you.

35 Seed Money Soaked With Tears 4

Gun-Ho deposited 515 million won in the company's bank account, which he borrowed earlier.

"I paid it all back to the company. I didn't even miss a penny, but I guess I will still have to pay for touching the company's money."

Gun-Ho gave a lot of thought on how he would handle the consequences.

"Once an outbound cash flow occurs in a business bank account for any reason, a statement for the activity must be made. The same applies to inbound cash flow as well. What am I gonna do then? Should I hand in my resignation letter and just quit my job? Even after paying all the money back to the company, I still have 530 million won in my personal bank account. It is enough money for myself to live by. Should I do that?"

Gun-Ho thought of confessing to what he did to the president.

"The president will get furious for the fact that I touched the company money. Even if I don't tell the president, I can get caught during an internal audit or an external CPA audit..."

Gun-Ho had been racking his brains for a while but couldn't find any good way to handle the situation.

"If I just quit the job and run away, I could be charged with a crime. Let's start the wage distribution process for now. I will have to keep my 530 million won in my account at all costs..."

Gun-Ho went to the president's office in order to start the wage distribution process.

"I will distribute paychecks this morning."

"Hmm... you will? How much will it be in total?"

"It will be 214 million won. I will use the B2B discounted funds received from

Mulpasaneop."

"How much will be left after paying the wages?"

"301 million won will be left. The remaining funds will be used to pay for the raw materials on the 30th. And we will have to pay for the secured loan interest on the 28th."

"Hmm. Okay."

The president signed on the wage payment document.

After processing the wage payments, Gun-Ho started to again look for an easy way out.

"Maybe I should make it look like an employee loan, probably not. The amount of loan cannot be that big."

A company sometimes lent money to its employees in an urgent situation. For example, to assist in an event of natural disaster, medical bills for surgery, etc. However, the amount would usually be a few million won. 500 million won would certainly not be adequate.

"Maybe I should make it look like that the president withdrew the funds temporarily and deposited back."

Since the president was a top-level managerial decision maker, he could withdraw and deposit funds from and to the business account. However, it requires the president's signature. Therefore, it was not an option Gun-Ho could take. Gun-Ho had to think deeper. His lip was almost healed from his biting last time; it started bleeding again.

"Hmm, that's right. Let's ask the accountant who is assisting our company work."

Gun-Ho called the accountant office which had been working with the YS Tech. When Gun-Ho told them he was calling from the accounting team of the YS Tech, Manager Jeong who often came to Gun-Ho's office picked up the phone.

"Manager Jeong? Hi, this is Gun-Ho Goo from YS Tech. May I speak to the accountant?"

"Our accountant? Is something wrong? Why don't you talk to me?"

"No, I just have a few legal questions for my friend."

"I am not sure if he is around. Give me a second."

After a while, a man picked up the phone.

"This is the accountant, Jong-Soo Na."

"Oh, hi. I am working with the YS accounting team. I am sorry to bother you. I am wondering if I could ask you a few questions if you don't mind."

"Sure, go ahead."

"My friend... he withdrew some money from his company business account and he deposited the same amount back to the account after a few days. In this case, will he be in trouble even though there is no financial loss on the company's side?"

"You mean he transferred the money to his personal bank account?"

"I believe so."

"If he transferred the funds to his personal account, then it is evidently illegal."

"Is that so? Even though there is no loss to the company?"

"Of course. If he withdrew money and then deposited only a partial amount, then it would constitute to embezzlement. If he deposited all of the money back, then it wouldn't amount to embezzlement. However, he would still be liable for using the company funds for personal use."

"Can he be arrested for it?"

"If it is embezzlement, the company will file a report. However, if there is no loss or damage to the company, it would be up to the company."

"I am not so sure, but as far as I know, my friend used that money to invest in something and made several million won out of it. In that case, can he keep the money he made?"

"Well, a business entity can invest in stocks. In this case, the earning is treated as a capital gain and should be deposited in the business account. However, if the money was transferred to a personal account, and the person made money out of it and the company found it out, then the company could ask that person to return that earning as well. Practically it is hard to find out."

"Then if the company doesn't file a report for use of company money, if not embezzlement, then it is possible that my friend wouldn't be charged with anything."

"Usually, even though the person didn't cause any loss to the company, they don't let him keep the job. Whether they file a report or not is really their call."

"Thank you so much for your time."

"You're welcome. If you have further questions, please let me know any time."

Gun-Ho made up his mind. He picked a day when the president seemed to be in a good mood. Gun-Ho went to the president's office with his letter of resignation.

"What is it?"

"I made a mistake. I am terribly sorry."

When Gun-Ho handed over his resignation letter, the president's eyes widened.

"What happened?"

"I... I transferred money from the company's business account to my personal account and put it back to the company account after a few days."

"What?"

"I am terribly sorry. I didn't cause any loss to the company but it is still wrong. So I will resign from my position."

"What? What? What the... what are you talking about?"

The president jumped up from his seat. He started speaking the dialect. That

meant he got furious.

"I do apologize. I am so so sorry, sir."

Gun-Ho gave a 90-degree bow to the president.

"Bring the current bank statement for each bank right now!"

"I just printed them out. Here they are."

Gun-Ho took out the bank statements from the folder he was carrying.

The president thoroughly looked at the bank statement for each bank, especially the Industrial Bank of Korea's bank statement.

"I transferred the B2B discounted payment to my account on the 5th and put the same amount back to the company's account on the 20th."

The president stared at the bank statements for quite a while, and then he crumbled the papers and threw them to the floor ruthlessly.

"So, you touched the company money, huh?"

"I am terribly sorry."

"You, f*cking as*hole!"

The president kicked Gun-Ho's shin.

"Oww!"

"That money is the company money. Even I can't freely touch it. How dare you take it out and put it back any way you want? Do you think you can do that as long as you don't cause any financial loss to the company?"

"I am so sorry."

Gun-Ho knelt on the floor in the president's office.

"I considered you as my younger brother so I wanted to support you to grow well in my company, and you did this to me? You moron f*cker!"

The president was breathing heavily in anger. He grabbed the orchid plant from his desk and threw it toward the wall close to Gun-Ho. The plant was smashed into pieces while spattering soil in the air.

"I am terribly sorry."

Gun-Ho begged for the president's forgiveness while kneeling on the floor with his head on the floor as well.

36 Seed Money Soaked With Tears 5

The president approached Gun-Ho who was kneeling on the floor. He bent and pinched Gun-Ho's cheek with his thumb and index finger and wagged it.

"You, what did you do with the company money? You invested in stocks, didn't you?"

"Gun-Ho didn't answer.

"You put the entire money you took back to the company account because you made some money out of it, huh? How much did you make? Several million won? Or a few ten million won?"

"No, that's not true. I was thinking of using the money I withdrew, but I got so scared that I didn't use the money at all. That's why I put it back to the company's account."

"Don't lie to me you pervert! I can't look into your personal account, but I can file a report against you. So the police can look into your account to investigate."

Gun-Ho recoiled from the idea that the police would have access to his bank statement, and the money he made would be revealed.

"You idiot, didn't you know that you would be held liable for using the company money even though you didn't cause any loss to the company?"

The president sighed and went back to his chair to sit in it.

"Since you touched the company money, I can't let you work here."

"I am so sorry, sir. I indeed wanted to assist you in any way I could, but things happened like this."

Gun-Ho's voice was trembling.

"Once you leave this company, do not ever work in the accounting field. You touched the company's money. You will likely do it again. You will eventually

find yourself in big trouble. If you didn't make any money out of it and rather lost some, our company would have faced a big problem and you... you would have ruined your life.

The president grabbed the bottle of water from his desk and started to gulp down water. He then leaned back in his chair and thought for a moment before he grabbed his cell phone and called someone.

"Manager Kim? It's me. I am sorry to bother you during your maternity leave."

Gun-Ho felt relieved when he heard the president talking to Manager Kim; he thought the president was calling the police.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo is leaving us for personal reasons. I was wondering if you could come to work until we find someone else to fill in the position."

Gun-Ho could hear Manager Kim's voice over the phone.

"As a matter of fact, I've been feeling so bored at home and I was wondering how things are going at work. I will come to work tomorrow."

"You don't have to work a lot. Maybe you could come and work in the morning just to handle funds related work. That will be enough."

"No, that's fine, sir. My mom is staying with me to help me take care of the baby. I can come to work. It's totally fine. It has been a month already."

"A month already? The baby must have grown a lot already and really cute. Then let's make it a part-time work for mornings only."

"Sounds good. I will see you tomorrow then."

After getting off the phone with Manager Kim, the president turned around to look at Gun-Ho.

"Get up. You look hideous f*cking kneeling on the floor."

"I am so so so sorry, sir."

The president sat back in his chair. His eyes were closed while he was drinking

his water. He looked exhausted. Gun-Ho was still in a kneeling position with his head down. They both stayed that way while being silent for a few minutes. Finally, the president talked slowly in a low voice.

"What's done is done. We don't want to make a big fuss about the situation. It won't do any good for any of us. Since the company didn't sustain any financial loss, let's put an end to it. We both don't want it to become known. Let's keep this between you and me."

"I am terribly sorry."

Gun-Ho lied on his face down on the floor in the president's office. Tears welled up in his eyes.

The president looked into a blank space. He then closed his eyes before talking again.

"Make the cash withdrawal that you made on the 5th and the 6th look like it was withdrawn by the company's president. The deposit on the 20th would be the return of the money I withdrew earlier. Gun-Ho Goo leaves the company the day after tomorrow once he hands over the work to Manager Kim when she comes to work tomorrow."

Gun-Ho was choked with tears by what the president had said.

"Thank you, sir. Thank you. I will never forget your generosity."

Gun-Ho cried while his face was lying down on the president's office floor. He felt relieved thinking that he could keep the 530 million won in his bank account while sobbing continuously.

After Gun-Ho handed over the work to Manager Kim, he packed his stuff in his OneRoomTel room. It was a windy day when he headed to Seoul with his belongings loaded in his car. On the way to Seoul, he stopped the car around Seonghwan Town. He then bowed deeply towards the Shingbong Town, Dunpo, Asan where the YS Tech Corp. was located.

"If I ever succeed in life, I will come and visit you."

Four months ago, Gun-Ho was singing Bohemian Rhapsody when he was on his

way to Dunpo, Asan. At that time, he was so excited about getting the job. But now, it felt a bit different. He felt like he was bearing a heavy burden on his shoulders. Gun-Ho took out his bankbook from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"530 million won! This is my money!"

Gun-Ho had never had this amount of money before. He thought of his father and relatives. They had never touched this much money in their lives either.

"Where in Seoul should I head to? Noryangjin is the only town I know in Seoul, where I studied for the level-9 government job exam. Let's go there for now!"

Gun-Ho arrived at Noryangjin, and he rented a room on the second floor of a townhouse behind the Dongjak District Office. It had a private bathroom and a kitchen.

"I paid ten million won for a security deposit with a monthly rent of 500,000 won. It's a lousy room for its price."

The house was old but the room was large.

"The room in Gwangjeok Town in Yangju City was the best. This room is more expensive than that room in Yangju but it is shabby... However, this room should be better than the rooms those people who are preparing for the government job exam have. They can't afford to have a large room like this."

The room Gun-Ho rented this time didn't come with any option. He had to get a refrigerator and a washer on his own. He bought the used ones. He even had to buy a rice cooker and a table; he also purchased used ones. He didn't have to buy a desk though. The person who used to live there left a desk behind.

"I spent 10 million won out of the 530 million won in my account for the room security deposit. So I have 520 million won left. Let's start by paying off my debt tomorrow. I have the sunshine loan and student loan."

Gun-Ho paid off his sunshine loan and student loan. He canceled the Revolving on his credit card debt and paid off the credit card as well. He had 500 million won left after he spent 20 million won for paying off all his debt.

"I shouldn't waste any more of this money. It is precious money."

Gun-Ho thought of his future while laying down in his room.

"Should I try the level-9 government job exam again since I am in Noryangjin now? If I study for the next two years, then I will be 34... If I could start working as a government employee from the age of 35, it's too late to grow in that career. Moreover, there is no guarantee that I will pass the exam this time..."

Gun-Ho then thought about starting his own business.

"What if I move to Incheon where my parents are? Buy a condo there and start a roasted chicken restaurant or a bakery? Maybe I should keep the 500 million won in the bank and work in a factory or get a job again in accounting."

Gun-Ho thought of all the options he could think of but nothing particular attracted him. Just at that moment, Gun-Ho received a call from Jong-Suk.

"What are you doing? Watching an adult video?"

"No. I came to Seoul. I am in Noryangjin right now."

"Noryangjin? Really? Are you going to prepare for the government job exam again?"

"No. I am thinking of starting my own business—like a small store."

"A store? Do you have money for that?"

"I don't have money but there is someone who wants to invest in my business."

"It's really risky to start a business with someone else's money. You don't even have any experience in running a business."

"I don't know."

"You have to be really careful in starting your own business. There are tons of people who miserably failed."

"I know that. So I am still thinking."

"You should ask your classmate, Suk-Ho then."

"Suk-Ho? What does he do? How come you know about my classmates more than I do?"

"That's because you don't go out a lot. Suk-Ho bro is running a bar at Gyeongridan Street in the Itaewon Town."

"Really? I believe his father was a soldier in the military."

"That's right. I heard he is doing good and making a lot of money. You should go see him."

"Hmm... Okay."

Gun-Ho remembered that he had a fight with Suk-Ho when he was in high school. It could be awkward to see him now, but he still decided to meet him.

37 Preparation for Starting a New Business 1

Gun-Ho was naturally not very extroverted.

Moreover, during his secondary school years, he didn't do well in school and his family was poor. That made him more shy and timid back then, and he didn't have many friends accordingly.

After graduating from high school, he went to a college in the countryside before he had to drop out of college because he couldn't afford to pay for his tuition and living expenses. He later went to a cyber college while planning to transfer to another four-year college. He didn't transfer to any college afterward though, but instead, he studied for the level-9 government job exam for quite a while. While Gun-Ho was trying all of above, he alienated the friends he had at that time even though there were only a few.

He then started working in a factory while moving around from Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province to Pocheon and to Yangju. At that time Gun-Ho almost had no friend. Jong-Suk who also worked in a factory with Gun-Ho was his only friend.

To make things worse social life wise, Gun-Ho got a sudden windfall of 500 million won when he worked in accounting in a company in Dunpo, Asan. Because Gun-Ho couldn't say he was blameless for acquiring that money, he developed the tendency to hide things and the thought that earning money was the top priority. This might explain why he became reclusive and reluctant to meet people even after he had made a big fortune and become one of the big players from Gangnam.

Back to the story, Gun-Ho was still going through hard times in his life.

"Suk-Ho Lee is running a bar at Gyeongridan Street? I remember him bragging about going to the Military Academy. Now he is serving alcohol? It's really hard to predict someone's future."

Gun-Ho had a bad memory about Suk-Ho. They had a bad fight when they were in high school; well, actually it was not a fight, but Gun-Ho got beaten up by Suk-Ho.

"I was about to leave for home after school when it suddenly began to rain. At that moment, Suk-Ho claimed that the umbrella I was holding was his and took it from me; I am certain it was mine. So we started fighting, but Suk-Ho was way bigger than me. He beat me up and gave me a pretty bad black eye. All the classmates around us took his side. When I got home afterward, I was all wet because of the rain and I cried so hard because I was upset. It still remains vivid in my memory. I am sure Suk-Ho will be very surprised if I go see him."

Gun-Ho chuckled while getting on the bus no. 152 from the Noryangjin bus station.

"I will have to get off at the Samgakji Station and take the subway from there. It's not far from here, and it's not even noon yet."

After he changed the subway line, he arrived at Itaewon Town.

"According to my Internet search earlier, this seems to be the way to get to Suk-Ho's bar. But what is this? A hillside road?"

When he approached the hillside road, there was a sign. 'Ministry of National Defense Service Support Corps.'

"Is this the building of the Central Army Corps of the Army? Well, the building doesn't seem that good, so does the street."

Once he passed by the building, bizarre business signs began to appear.

"Salon de Earth, The Code, BISTECCA... I have no idea what those words even mean."

Gun-Ho had to wander the Gyeongridan Street for a while before he could find Suk-Ho's bar that Jong-Suk indicated.

"Jong-Suk should have told me to look for the Itaewon Community Service Center to find Suk-Ho's bar. It's right here."

The bar had a vague sign and drawing on its front, while Gun-Ho was not sure whether it was a restaurant or a bar. He tried to open the door. It was locked; the bar was not open yet.

"They open late probably because they serve alcohol."

Gun-Ho decided to go to Itaewon Town and have lunch there and come back, hoping that the bar would be open by then.

"How much would it cost to open a bar like this? It doesn't seem to be large and its location is a little off the main street. The initial cost to start this type of business wouldn't be that high... Let's have lunch first in Itaewon Town."

Itaewon Town was situated next to Gyeongridan Street. It was a well-developed town with stores, restaurants, bars, etc. It was also crowded; Gun-Ho could find many westerners and African Americans as well.

"How much would these roadside stores cost to open? Probably expensive, huh? If I have a store like them, would I be able to handle it? I've never run my own business before. I should be extra careful."

Gun-Ho had a pork cutlet for lunch. After lunch, he wandered around Itaewon Town while browsing shops there.

"How much would a clothing store like this make per day? All they have to pay is the rent and labor..."

Gun-Ho looked at the clock on his smartphone. It was ten past two.

"I wonder if Suk-Ho came to his bar and open it already."

Gun-Ho headed back to Gyeongridan Street.

"Comparing to Itaewon Town, there is not much traffic here and the street extends all the way over the hill. I am not sure why this street is so popular."

Gun-Ho arrived at Suk-Ho's bar again. The door was open. Someone was organizing trash bags in front of the bar. It was Suk-Ho. He looked a bit different, but it was Suk-Ho for sure.

"Hey, Suk-Ho. Long time no see."

Hearing someone call his name, Suk-Ho lifted his head and looked at Gun-Ho. He was blinking his eyes slowly and he didn't seem to recognize Gun-Ho.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo. Your classmate from high school."

"Oh, Gun-Ho. I didn't recognize you. You used to be skinny back then. You gained some weight, man."

"You gained some weight too. I heard you are running a bar here from Jong-Suk."

"Jong-Suk? "

"Yeah, his parents used to have Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup) restaurant in our town."

"Oh, him! That flippant kid!"

"Yup, that's him."

"Do you work here in Gyeoangridan Street too?"

"No. I am planning to start my own business. I am here hoping to get some advice from you."

"From me? Well, come inside."

Gun-Ho followed Suk-Ho inside the bar. The bar had about 12 tables. Several chairs were still scattered and they hadn't finished cleaning yet.

"I was about to clean the bar. It was a bit messy now. Please have a seat here. I will bring some green tea."

Gun-Ho sat on a chair and looked around. A large picture of a western singer holding a guitar and a picture of an African American singer were hanging on the wall with some other pictures.

"They are so distracting."

Suk-Ho brought green tea.

"Hey, it has been a long time. The last time I saw you was in high school, and it has been more than ten years since we graduated."

"Yeah, I think so."

"I heard that you were working in a factory in Pocheon or somewhere."

"Right. I used to work in a factory in Pocheon and Asan, and I recently quit the job."

"You did? Do you have something you want to do on your mind?"

"I haven't decided yet. How large is this bar?"

"It's 23 pyung. Length should be 11 meters and width should be 7 meters."

"How is the business?"

"It has been over a year since I opened this bar. I struggled a lot in the beginning, but the business got better lately as the sales have increased."

"You have 12 tables. It must cost you a lot to start the bar with this size. How much did you spend?"

"It cost me around 150 million won."

"150 million won? Wow. You had saved a lot of money to start your business."

"How can possibly someone at our age can have 150 million won? I have partners, my two friends. One has another job, so he just invested money in this bar. The other friend and I run this bar by actually working here, so we don't have to spend additional money to hire someone."

"If three people invested in it, then each came with 50 million won?"

"Yeah, that's correct. I borrowed the money from my parents since I hadn't had any money saved up at that time."

"If I remember correctly, your father was a soldier in the army. Did he work here

in Gyeongridan Street?"

"No, he served in a unit in the front, so not this area. He is already discharged from the army and he was a colonel."

"I see."

"So, what are you planning? How much are you going to invest to start?"

"I am thinking of opening a restaurant. I don't have much money either, but there is someone who is willing to invest..."

"I had been everywhere before I started this bar. I went to the area around Hongik University, Konkuk University, and Garosugil Road in Sinsa Town, Gangnam."

"It is expensive to open a business in those areas, right?"

"Don't get me started. Even if you have 200-300 million won, you can only get a tiny space in an isolated back street. Moreover, there are too many restaurants in our country."

While Gun-Ho and Suk-Ho were talking, Suk-Ho's business partner came in the bar.

38 Preparation for Starting a New Business 2

Suk-Ho's friend was an extremely obese person with a beard and all tangled hair—he looked more like an artist than a businessman running a bar.

"This is my friend from college."

Gun-Ho stood up to meet Suk-Ho's friend/business partner.

"Hi, I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"Hello, I am Han-Young Bang."

He had a high-pitched voice like a woman, which contrasted with his large body. Gun-Ho and Han-Young greeted each other with a handshake. Han-Young's hand felt very soft. Gun-Ho became self-conscious and felt embarrassed about his rough hand due to his prolonged manual work in a factory.

Once Han-Young went to the kitchen, Gun-Ho resumed talks about his business ideas with Suk-Ho.

"If I open a restaurant, which area do you recommend?"

"You should do a lot of legwork before you could find the right location. Even though we have too many restaurants in this country, there are certainly popular restaurants which are crowded with people all the time. There is a Thai restaurant downstairs in this building. They are doing very well."

"A Thai restaurant? The owner should know how to cook the food he is selling, right?"

"Recipes are simple. The food should be delicious, of course, but the location is crucial. Where do you live now?"

"I am in Noryangjin."

"Noryangjin? Noryangjin is good to have a restaurant. That area is filled with people who are preparing for whatever exams, and they all could be potential customers. I've seen a Vietnamese restaurant on TV, selling pho in Noryangjin. That restaurant made a huge success there. The owner is a Vietnamese woman married to a Korean man. The restaurant is smaller than my bar and they said they were making 90 million won per month."

"90 million won per month? Wow!"

"Not every restaurant in Noryangjin made such success. There are restaurants in the same area sold to another person because the previous owner went bust. Well, you should have a lot to think about. You want to take your time and research enough before you actually open your own business."

"Thank you for your time and advice today, Suk-Ho."

"I enjoyed talking with you, Gun-Ho. If you start your business and making money more than 15 million won per month, you can survive."

"15 million won per month, then I should make 500,000 won per day..."

"It is not easy to make 500,000 won daily. If the area is not established for business, many businesses in that area barely make 200,000 won per day. You could easily see the change of ownership of a business overnight."

"Hmm..."

When Gun-Ho was continuously talking with Suk-Ho, a man wearing a motorcycle helmet entered the bar while carrying a big box.

"Delivery for fresh produce, sir."

"You can place it on the table over there."

When Suk-Ho stood up, Gun-Ho stood up along with him.

"You seem to get busy now. I'd better go. Thank you again for today."

"You are leaving? Come visit me often. Here is my business card."

Gun-Ho took Suk-Ho's green-colored business card and walked out of the bar.

Gun-Ho decided to explore the areas in Seoul, where businesses are already established with high traffic of young people.

"Let's try the area around Hongik University."

Gun-Ho took the subway and got off at the Hapjeong Station on line 2. He walked toward the Hongik University after making a right turn at Bobo Hotel. While walking down the street, Gun-Ho saw a lot of stores with beautiful interiors, as well as many students passing by.

"This is indeed a nice place. The female students are all pretty."

Gun-Ho stopped by a café to drink some coffee. He used to hesitate to enter a store like a café, but he now lost his inhibition probably because he had 500 million won in hand.

"The store names are so distracting. They are stranger than the ones in Gyeongridan Street. ThanksBooks, Dorothy, St.Coqs... If I open a restaurant, what should I name it?"

Gun-Ho kept walking down the street while thinking of various things.

"Right. Let's opt-out the studying option for the level-9 government job exam. With the starting salary of less than two million won, it will take forever to succeed in that career. In this capitalist society, money is ruling."

Gun-Ho arrived at the three-way junction on the Hongik Club Street.

"I see some of the small bars here. Solo, Gwangdong... Maybe I can start with a small bar. What is that? Lotpongi? Well, a small bar doesn't require a large space. Let's ask a realtor about it."

When Gun-Ho saw a realtor's office with its door open, he entered there. It was his first time being in a realtor's office.

"Hello, welcome. What can I do for you?"

A man in his 50s was reading a newspaper in his chair. He stood up when he saw

Gun-Ho entering the office. There was a lady in her 40s working at her desk.

"I am interested in a small bar. I'd like to know how much it cost to open one."

"Well, it depends on the bar you are interested in. Why don't you have a seat here?"

Gun-Ho hesitated a bit before he sat on a sofa.

"We actually have one that just came on the market. How much should I match?"

"I'm sorry?"

"I need to know how much you want to spend in order for me to find one that is matched to it."

The realtor scanned Gun-Ho from head to toe while responding.

Gun-Ho had 500 million won in hand but he didn't want to invest it all now, in case the business wouldn't go well. In addition, he was concerned that if he spent a large amount of money, people might be wondering about the source of money. Gun-Ho thought 100 million won would be adequate."

"How much is the one that just came on the market?"

"That one is located on the street across the LohasTower office-tel and its location is really good. That street has heavy traffic of students and residents of the office-tel. Would you like to take a look?"

"What about the price..."

"It is 18 pyung. The price is 150 million won including the premium. If you are interested in it, I can negotiate the price for you."

Gun-Ho hesitated.

"Let's go take a look first."

The realtor didn't wait for Gun-Ho's response and prepared to visit the property by wearing his jacket. He talked to the lady at her desk before he headed out of the office.

"I will be right back after showing the property to this customer. You should stay here until I come back. The person who wanted to see the room might call soon."

Gun-Ho and the realtor headed to the bar that recently came to the market. The realtor said while walking,

"It is impressive to see a young man who could invest 150 million won in a business."

Gun-Ho blushed and didn't respond to the realtor.

They entered the street across the office-tel after passing the Far East Broadcasting Company. It was a small bar in an isolated area. It seemed to be the least decorated store among others in the same area. Gun-Ho walked in the bar. The owner and a kitchen worker woman were trimming leeks.

"Hello. I brought someone who wanted to take a look at your store."

The owner seemed shy. While the owner was just standing there without saying anything, the realtor started a sales pitch passionately as if he owned the store.

"Look at this. It is 18 pyung large, but it looks bigger than its actual size. The owner will leave all kitchen appliances. The building owner is very nice too. He is an elder of a church. You will get warm water constantly, and it comes with a private bathroom. You can't easily find a property like this one."

Gun-Ho was baffled. He couldn't believe that this tiny and shabby bar cost 150 million won. Gun-Ho asked the owner, "Are you moving your business to somewhere?"

Instead of the owner, the realtor answered Gun-Ho's question.

"The owner here used to run a BBQ restaurant. She is moving to Sinchon Town opening a larger restaurant. This bar is doing well too. We don't see many people on the street right now but you have to wait and see at night. This area will be filled with people at night. This is part of the famous Hongik University Street after all."

Gun-Ho pretended to look around the store.

"Thank you for showing. I appreciate it."

Gun-Ho walked out of the store. The realtor followed Gun-Ho and poked Gun-Ho in the waist. He then whispered into Gun-Ho's ear in a low voice.

"I will try to make it down to 140 million won for you. I can talk to the owner. If that works, just add small money to the commission for a drink, okay?"

"Huh? Oh, okay, okay."

Gun-Ho just said it without thinking. The realtor continued talking skillfully.

39 Preparation for Starting a New Business 3

The realtor was enthusiastic in making a sales pitch for the bar.

"A store priced at 150 million won is very popular among baby boomers. It often gets highly competitive to acquire it these days. The baby boomers—the people who were born around the 6.25 Korean War are retiring now. After having worked for 30 years, their retirement pay is more or less 150 million won. What would they do with that money? The easy business they pick after their retirement is a restaurant business. That's why a 150 million won store is quick to sell."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho realized again that the 500 million won he was holding was a significant amount of money. He wanted to keep the money and grow it at all costs. However, he didn't like the store he just visited.

"So, how was it? Do you like the store?"

"I am not so sure. I will have to think about it before I make a decision."

"You don't have to think about it. If a person at your age takes over the store, it will succeed 100%. Let's go back to my office and make a contract."

"No, no. I will need some time to think about it."

"Haha. You have a lot of things in your mind for a young person. Then give me your contact number. I will call you right away once I get the final price from the owner."

Gun-Ho was somewhat in a difficult position. He didn't want to give the realtor his number but the realtor was tenacious and stubborn. Gun-Ho eventually gave the realtor his cell phone number.

"What about those roadside stores? They are beautiful."

"They are way more expensive, over 300 million won. In addition, there is no available store for sale."

Gun-Ho thought just for a moment that maybe he should get one of those 300 million won store, and then changed his mind immediately.

"Quit it. You don't have any experience at all in running your own business. You could blow the money." Gun-Ho talked to himself.

After meeting with the realtor, Gun-Ho walked further around the Hongik University Street. All the stores on the street looked the same after he saw so many stores already.

"Well, since I am here, let's go to the Sinchon Town. It's not far from here. That area must be well established for a business like here since Yonsei University and Ewha Women's University are there."

Gun-Ho slowly walked toward the Yonsei University entrance from Sinchon Hyundai Department Store.

"There are tons of people here too. I see a lot of people and stores everywhere."

The Sinchon town had a bit different vibe from the Hongik University area. However, the sales price for stores should be as expensive as the ones in the Hongik University area. Gun-Ho almost entered a realtor's office when he saw one there. Realtors could be very tiresome when they tried to convince a person persistently to buy a property.

"So all these young people pouring into the street are students of either Yonsei University or Ewha Women's University? When I was in high school in Bucheon, only the ones who were ranked first or second could get into these top universities. But here are a lot of those people."

As he was walking down the street while enjoying watching people and stores, Gun-Ho arrived at the main entrance of the Ewha Women's University. He could see some Chinese tourists as well.

"For a restaurant, the selection of food and the location are the key."

He took pictures of some stores with attractive interior or unique store name.

"I had enough for today. Let's try Garosugil Road in Gangnam and Konkuk University area tomorrow."

The following day, Gun-Ho took the subway at the Noryangjin Station heading to Banpo Express Bus Terminal to change to the subway line 3.

"So I need to get off at the Sinsa Subway Station and walk toward Apgujeong Town to get to the Garosugil Road."

Gun-Ho arrived at the Garosugil Road after crossing the street from Youngdong Hotel. He looked around the Garosugil Road area and went to the Konkuk University area in the afternoon. He felt a bit dizzy and confused; he probably saw too many stores to digest at once.

"Having an expensive store in this area will make me look really nice, but I don't want to risk that much money. Maybe I should start with Noryangjin; the stores are not so pricey there. The problem there though is low ATV (Average Transaction Value) even though there is high traffic of people."

Gun-Ho was leaning toward Noryangjin rather than these strange areas; Noryangjin was familiar to him since he spent a few years there when he had studied for the level-9 government job exam.

"The exam preparers in Noryangjin don't have much money in their pockets, so relatively cheap food like Vietnamese noodle will work. I don't expect to make 90 million won per month like that pho restaurant Suk-Ho mentioned. The monthly sales of 30 million won will be enough for me... That will allow me to make a 10 million won profit every month."

Gun-Ho wrapped his head around.

"If I make 10 million won per month, then I would make the same amount an office worker makes in a big company with over 100 million won yearly salary... Okay, let's focus on the Noryangjin area. It's close to my home. According to the book I read, it's better to have a business close to home."

Gun-Ho came back to Noryangjin.

Noryangjin had certainly very different vibe from the area around the Hongik University or Konkuk University. The street was narrow and people there were exam preparers who suffered from enormous stress on a daily basis, while people in those universities areas were neat and well-dressed. The Noryangjin area was definitely dingy. When it got dark outside, the street was filled with people.

"So all these people are the potential customers who would let me make money."

Gun-Ho smiled delightedly while watching the people passing by on the street.

"This is it. It has to be Noryangjin. I don't need complex recipes to please these people. I just need to be generous on the quantity."

Gun-Ho visited a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant.

"I believe I've been here once when I studied for the exam. Oh, they have POS stands (Point-Of-Sale) outside the main entrance. Let me get the number to reserve my turn. Wow! My number is 24! That means all these people standing here are waiting for their table."

After a while, Gun-Ho could have his noodle soup.

"Hmm, the noodle soup is so so... But with the price of 3,500 won, people would choose this over the Cupbab (Cooked rice with other ingredients served in a paper cup). This noodle soup is simple and fast to eat; you can just slurp it with the soup. It is served in a hot soup, so the exam preparers will like it."

Gun-Ho walked out of the restaurant. He was smoking in front of the Shinhan Bank when he received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro? I heard you met with Suk-Ho bro in Gyeongridan Street."

"Yeah, I did."

"How was it? Was it helpful?"

"He said a Thai restaurant hit a jackpot there."

"A Thai restaurant? Bro, you are staying in Noryangjin, aren't you? Why don't

you open a Thai restaurant there?"

"Man, I have no idea how to cook Thai food. I've never been to that country."

"You can easily find the recipes on the Internet. In Noryangjin, the food doesn't have to be authentic. As long as you serve the people there with a large amount of food, it will work since they are exam preparers with small pocket money."

"I am not sure."

"If you want to open a restaurant in one of those university areas or Garosugil Road, you have to pay a high price for the store and the food has to be delicious. You didn't go to school for cooking. You have never worked in a restaurant. Right? Start in Noryangjin. You don't have much money, bro. Even though there is someone who is willing to invest, it should be less than 100 million won, right?"

Gun-Ho felt an urge to scream, "Kid, I am a person with 500 million won in my hand."

"I am planning to stop by a realtor's office tomorrow. How about Kalguksu (a Korean noodle soup) and name it like mother's Kalguksu or something, or Sujebi (a Korean hand-pulled dough soup)? I heard there is a very popular Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant here."

"You have to come up with something unique. There are people in Noryangjin, who consider their mealtime as a food trip. I was one of them when I was in Noyrangjin."

"I see. I will have to look further tomorrow."

Gun-Ho got up late. He started searching on the Internet.

"Hmm, I can find ingredients for a Vietnamese noodle soup, Thai food, and Philippines food in Ansan. There is a wholesaler there."

Gun-Ho continued searching on the Internet.

"If I buy these ingredients online, I can easily get scammed. Let's visit that wholesale store in Ansan. I think I can open a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant

behind the gas station even though there is one already in Noryangjin. Let's not be greedy, but set the goal with 10 million won per month."

Gun-Ho thought it should be okay to open another Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant behind the gas station even though there was one already in the same area. That one was distant from the location Gun-Ho was considering. He would invest 100 million won for now and hid the remaining 400 million won somewhere safe. Even if he was threatened by a robber for his life, Gun-Ho thought he would never ever let anyone take that money.

40 Open a Restaurant in Noryangjin

1

Gun-Ho finally decided to open a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant in Noryangjin; he wanted to serve cheap and delicious pho.

There was a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant in Noryangjin already which was located in a back street across the Noryangjin Station. That street was on the town bus line and there were Shinhan Bank and a private institution for government job exams. That restaurant was so popular that it was even introduced on KBS (one of Korean TV stations). The owner's wife was a young Vietnamese woman.

"The owner used to sell Cupbab on a tented cart on the street in front of the private prep-institution for government job exams. If he could do it, then I can do it too."

Gun-Ho believed he could handle a Vietnamese noodle soup well comparing to other dishes. He recalled his mom's noodle soup he often had from his childhood. She made the soup with anchovy, spring onions and soy sauce. She poured the soup over boiled noodle already prepared.

"Cooking the Vietnamese rice noodle shouldn't be so different from cooking the Korean wheat noodle."

Gun-Ho went to the Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant again. He secretly took pictures of their dishes, the interior, and the restaurant sign.

"The best location is probably the street where a lot of students from the private prep-institution for government job exams are passing by every day. However, the traditional market street is not bad either."

Noryangjin is a mecca for whatever exam preparatory private institutions. Most institutions provide prep-courses for government job exams or the police exam.

"Let's open the restaurant on the Daiso street passing the gas station across the

street. There is no noodle soup restaurant there. The Vietnamese restaurant already here is run by a Vietnamese lady. If I open another Vietnamese restaurant, will people think the food is not authentic but it is fake Vietnamese food? Maybe not. Maybe people will like mine better if I reduce some strong smell from Vietnamese authentic ingredients and add some Korean flavor."

Gun-Ho continuously researched and collected useful information for his restaurant business. He already printed out the Vietnamese noodle soup recipe found on the Internet.

"I can easily purchase some of the ingredients such as Chili sauce and Sriracha online but let's visit the wholesale store in Ansan. I have seen the pictures of those ingredients but never actually seen them in person."

Gun-Ho decided to go to that store in Asan using the subway.

Gun-Ho took the subway line 1 to go to the Geumjeong Station. He, then, changed to line 4.

"I see many foreigners in the subway in this area."

Foreigners are not new to Gun-Ho. He had seen foreign workers when he worked at the plastic factory in Hwaseong, and other factories in Pocheon and Yangju. However, it appeared that there were way more foreigners found in this particular area.

When he got off at the Ansan Station, his thought about the foreigners was confirmed. Once he crossed the street via underground passage; there were a lot of foreigners sitting on the ground: the ethnic Koreans living in China, Vietnamese, Filipinos, and even people with darker skin from India. Some people had a beard, and some were wearing turbans.

"Wow, I feel like I am in another country. I've never expected to see this many foreigners in Korea."

Many business signs were written in another language— probably Vietnamese or Thai. Some of them were written in Chinese for Chinese people.

"Korea is now a country of multi-culture."

Gun-Ho enjoyed looking around the market; he even forgot for the moment that he came here to buy Vietnamese food ingredients. He felt his legs got tired when he saw a wholesale store, 'World Market.'

He entered the store. The small store was filled with foreign products and people. Gun-Ho wedged himself into the crowd all the way to the counter. He then showed the picture saved in his smartphone to the person standing behind the counter.

"This is a Vietnamese sauce. Do you carry it here?"

"It's on the shelf over there."

The same red bottle he saw in the picture was placed on the shelf. When he saw the sauce, he got goosebumps and it was strange.

"This is the one!"

He found the rice noodle as well. The dried rice noodle was packaged in a vinyl wrap.

"Sir, how much is this rice noodle?"

"Are you going to sell them?"

"Yes, I am."

"Then, I can give it to you for a discounted price. Is it for Thai restaurant?"

"No. Vietnamese restaurant."

"The noodle you are holding is Thai noodle made in Thai. It's 5 millimeters in width."

"Oh, it's a Thai noodle? The letters on the package look like Vietnamese—alphabets with some dots on top of them."

"The one next to it, that is the Vietnamese noodle. Its name is written in Korean too. Do you see that? Banh Pho Kho?"

"Oh, I see it. Thank you. I will take this."

"It's 500 grams for each package. How many do you need?"

"Umm... Let me look around for other sauces first. I will let you know by then."

"Alright."

The owner was busy with other customers, so he didn't pay attention to Gun-Ho anymore.

Gun-Ho placed several sauces and a few rice noodles in his basket. He hesitated to take more bottles of sauce because he had to carry them, and they were heavy.

"I think this should be enough to practice at home."

Gun-Ho wanted to try to cook the rice noodle by himself at home.

"I have to know how to cook the noodle soup so I don't get swayed by the cooking ladies in my restaurant kitchen."

Gun-Ho brought his basket with several bottles of sauces and rice noodles to the counter.

"I thought you were going to open a restaurant. Are you sure this is all you need?"

"Yes, for now. I haven't opened a restaurant yet. I just need some for practice for now."

"Where are you opening your restaurant?"

"In Noryangjin."

"There is one in Noryangjin already."

"I know. Mine will be several blocks away from that restaurant."

The store owner nodded his head.

"You will be fine with your restaurant since the area is filled with tons of exam preparers. Take our business card with you. We provide delivery as well if you need for later."

"Thank you. I will come again."

Gun-Ho went to the subway station with the ingredients he purchased. It felt light when he left the store, but now his arms felt tender after carrying the bags all the way to the subway station.

"Well, this is my first step to succeed in business. Once I become rich and someone comes to interview me for my success, I would say, "I used to carry heavy bags of ingredients by myself from the store in Ansan all the way to Noryangjin. I had to endure the pain on my arms."

Gun-Ho smiled delightedly thinking of what he would say when he succeeded.

Gun-Ho started cooking the noodle soup. He bought fresh ingredients from a traditional market: beef, bean sprouts, garlic, spring onions, onions, gingers, etc. He purchased hot peppers and cilantro from a supermarket. He didn't know what cilantro was until this time. It was a vegetable smelled like a bedbug and looked like water parsley. It had to be added to the noodle soup for an authentic taste of Vietnamese noodle soup.

"For beef, I have to soak it in cold water to let the blood out of the meat."

His room got messy from his cooking practice.

"First time is always hard. It will get easier after a lot of practice. Aw, it's hot. I should be careful with the soup; it's really hot."

His noodle soup looked somewhat similar to the noodle soup sold in a Vietnamese restaurant.

"I can prepare fresh ingredients by washing them and to have them ready to use. The soup is easy. I can just use these sauces I bought from the store. Then all that is left is for me to make money from this. Let me try my noodle soup."

Gun-Ho tried the noodle soup he just cooked.

"Not bad at all. It doesn't taste any different than the one that the Vietnamese lady cooked."

Well, people are usually very generous in evaluating their own dish. Gun-Ho

truly enjoyed his own noodle soup. He wanted to serve it to Jong-Suk or his parents if they were here with him.

"Okay, let's sell it for 3,500 won, and let's make 300 sales of this noodle soup per day. That makes me earn 31,500,000 won per month. The ingredients won't cost much. If I add the rent and labor and other stuff necessary, the total expense will be about 20,000,000 won. Then the profit on a monthly basis will be 10,000,000 won. Well, if I can sell 400 noodle soups instead of 300, then I will make 42,000,000 won with 15,000,000 profit per month. If that happens, I can acquire one more restaurant."

Gun-Ho was dreaming while doing the math of how much he would make, and how further he could get if he succeeded.

41 Open a Restaurant in Noryangjin

2

Gun-Ho went to a realtor's office in Noryangjin.

This time, he knew what to expect there since he had been in realtor's office in the Hongik University area earlier.

"Hello? I am looking for a store on the street over there. I am thinking of around 20 pyung for the size."

Gun-Ho sounded like an expert in the field.

"We do have one about 15 pyung large. Would you like to take a look? Its location is good."

"Sure. I'd like to see it."

Gun-Ho followed the realtor to visit the store.

"The foot traffic is a bit..."

"If you hang a new store sign and make the entrance bright with more lights, you will get more foot traffic to the store."

"How much did you say it was?"

"120 million won!"

"It's pricey for the size."

Gun-Ho shook his head like he knew a lot about the real estate market.

"Give me your contact number. I will let you know when a good store appears on the market."

Gun-Ho left his phone number with the realtor and walked out of the office.

While Gun-Ho was looking for a property in Noryangjin, the realtor who showed the small bar around Hongik University kept calling him. He said he reduced the price down to 140 million won and asked Gun-Ho to come quickly to his office to finalize the deal.

"I'm not a pushover. I know enough!"

Gun-Ho told that realtor, "Okay," but he never visited his office again.

Gun-Ho stopped by another realtor's office in Noryangjin.

"Do you have a good property for a restaurant business?"

"Why don't you come and have a seat?"

"So, do you have one?"

"We have one for 300 million won. 40 pyung large! They are currently running a chicken feet restaurant. The location is excellent."

"That's way over my budget."

"Well, there is a smaller one on the market, but the owner keeps changing his mind... If you are really interested in it, I will talk to the owner."

"What do you mean by 'keeps changing his mind'?"

"He said the price was 100 million won yesterday, and says 120 today, and then will say 110 tomorrow; he keeps changing the price like that."

"How big is the store?"

"It's 18 pyung large. The owner has run his business in that location for a long time."

"Can I take a look?"

"Did you bring the earnest money? You have to be serious about this property for me to make an inquiry to the owner."

"No, I didn't, but if I like the location, I can make a contract right away."

"Okay then. Let's go!"

The store was a deep-fried chicken restaurant. Gun-Ho had to walk a long way away from the main street, but there were many OneRoomTels around that area and the location was not bad at all. The restaurant was old and not very clean though.

"You can freshen up the inside of the restaurant. It will look good."

"Did you say 100 million won?"

"I don't like that as* owner. I will smash the price down to 95 million won for you."

The owner was watching TV that was hung on the wall when Gun-Ho entered the restaurant with the realtor. The owner seemed to be startled by the unexpected visit as he jumped up from his seat when he saw them.

"I brought someone who is looking for a property. Sir, 100 million won is too pricey for this store and no one will pay that much. This buyer said 95 million won was still too high, but I insisted that he had to see it."

"I heard the store next to us was sold for 120 million won..."

"That store is totally different from this one. You can't sell this store if you keep on insisting on that price. Let me talk to you for a second."

The realtor went outside with the restaurant owner while leaving Gun-Ho in the restaurant. After talking in an undertone for a while, the realtor and the owner came back to the restaurant.

"He said he would need time to think about it. I have another property I'd like to show you. Let's go see that one too."

As the realtor walked out of the restaurant with Gun-Ho, he whispered into Gun-Ho's ear in a low voice, "I told him there was another store on the market, 20 pyung large and 95 million won. I made that up to convince him. I think it's working. If he didn't trouble me with the price like that, I wouldn't have done this to him. Well, anyway, I think I can get it for 95 million won. I will let you know tomorrow. You need to bring the earnest money then. If I break down the

price for you, the security deposit is 25 million won and the premium is 70 million won. The monthly rent is 1,600,000 won."

"The earnest money is 10%, right?"

"Is this your first time? I thought you have done this before."

"Um, I have but it was in a province."

"If we make the contract tomorrow, you pay 25 million to the building owner and the premium to the restaurant owner."

"Right. I know that."

After giving his phone number to the realtor, Gun-Ho went back to the deep-fried chicken restaurant. He wanted to take a close look at the property again.

"Hmm... It's not bad at all. If I change the interior, it can get a totally different look."

While Gun-Ho was looking at the outside of the restaurant, the restaurant owner walked out of the restaurant.

"Eek, let's go before he sees me!"

Gun-Ho thought he would be embarrassed if the restaurant owner saw him coming back to look at his restaurant again. Gun-Ho hid himself quickly by going to another alley.

The following day, Gun-Ho received a call from the realtor and went to the deep fried chicken restaurant with the earnest money. There was no customer since it was morning time.

"95 million won is really a good price for the store."

The restaurant owner smiled at what the realtor said. After a moment, a man in his 70s entered the restaurant.

"This is the building owner."

Gun-Ho greeted him by bowing. The realtor and the building owner seemed to

be close to each other.

"You seem to be getting younger every day, sir. You look healthier."

"Thank you."

The building owner seemed to be satisfied with what the realtor said.

"He is an elder of a church, very nice person. It's important to have a nice person as your building owner. You are lucky."

Gun-Ho bowed again to the building owner. Gun-Ho remembered he was told that the building owner of the small bar in the Hongik University area was also an elder of a church. He thought many elders in a church owned a building.

The building owner asked Gun-Ho, "What sort of business did you plan to have here?"

"I will open a Vietnamese restaurant."

The building owner nodded his head while the restaurant owner looked worried. Gun-Ho signed the contract and paid the full amount of 25 million won to the building owner without going through the earnest money process. To the restaurant owner, Gun-Ho gave 10 million won for now and promised to pay him the remaining 60 million ten days later when the restaurant owner would vacate the store.

Gun-Ho followed the realtor to his office while carrying the contract.

"Did you say this was your first time opening a restaurant?"

"Oh, I have done it before for a short amount of time in a province..."

"If you are new to the restaurant business, you need to get training and register your business. You also have to get a food service license."

"Huh? A food service license?"

"Haha, well, I knew you were not aware of all these requirements. Oh, please give me the realtor fee now. Also, you need to give me an additional 1 million

won since I worked so hard to reduce the price from 100 million won down to 95 million won for you."

"Huh? Additional 1 million?"

"I could have asked you more."

Gun-Ho felt compelled to pay the additional fee. He took out one more check of 1 million won from his wallet. He had prepared a few more 1 million checks in case he needed them.

The realtor took the realtor fee plus the 1 million won check from Gun-Ho and put them to the inner pocket of his jacket. He then smiled with his eyes.

"If you have to sell the store in the future, I can help you again. We can help each other, right?"

The realtor took out a bottle of Bacchus (a Korean energy drink) and handed it to Gun-Ho, and said, "Before you can open a restaurant, you need to receive one-day training provided by the Korean Foodservice Industry Association. For the business license, you can register with the Dongjak District Tax Office; you will have to bring the contract we made today. Also, don't forget to bring your government-issued ID when you visit the Dongjak District Tax Office."

The realtor knew from the beginning that Gun-Ho was a newbie in the restaurant business.

"What about the food service license? Where can I get it?"

"You know the Jangseungbaegi Subway Station, right? If you walk all the way up from the Noryangjin elementary school to the three-way intersection around that subway station, you will see the Dongjak District Health Center. They will issue the food service license."

42 Open a Restaurant in Noryangjin

3

Gun-Ho went to the Korean Foodservice Industry Association to get his required training. He was told the training would be held in the Yeongang building hall next to the Christian Cultural Center in Jongno 5-ga District.

"Wow, a lot of people are here. Are they all going to open a restaurant?"

Gun-Ho slept half of the time during the training; however, some parts were interesting. He remembered the trainer saying, "Ladies and gentlemen! If we have 500 of you here today, 300 of you will close their business within three years. This is the reality."

"If so, how many of us would close their business in five years then?" Gun-Ho took a note diligently.

"Do you know how many restaurants we have in our country? What is the ratio of restaurants to population in Korea? The ratio is 1 restaurant to 75 people. Therefore, you have to compete arduously against each other and keep your business differentiated from others in order to survive. In U.S.A and Japan, the ratio of restaurants to population is 1 to over 100."

"Hmm., I will have to stay alert for the competition."

Gun-Ho was not aware of the fact that there were so many restaurants in Korea. He suddenly felt nervous and anxious.

After the training, Gun-Ho stopped by the Dongjak District Tax Office to register his business. That office had jurisdiction over Noryangjin.

"Okay, I have the contract with me. That realtor said I needed to bring this to get the business license."

There were a lot of people in that district tax office. He pulled off his number and waited for his turn. After quite a while, his number was up. He already filled

out the necessary information in the form such as his personal information, mailing address, etc. through a machine in that office; it was convenient.

"Are you registering as a general taxpayer or a simplified taxpayer?"

"Excuse me?"

Gun-Ho had no idea what those words meant. He was perplexed.

"I'm going to open a Vietnamese restaurant."

"I will issue the business license as a general taxpayer."

After the officer entered some information into her computer, she issued the business license and handed it to Gun-Ho; it was quick.

"Here you are."

"Wow! It's so fast."

Gun-Ho looked at his business license; it was stamped with the district tax chief officer's name. The paper was thick like a college diploma. Gun-Ho remembered seeing these kinds of papers in a frame that were hanging on the wall of the restaurants he had visited.

"Now I have my own business with my name."

Gun-Ho felt happy while holding his business license.

"Oh, I will have to stop by the district health center too!"

In the district health center, Gun-Ho received a physical test in addition to a urine test for sexually transmitted diseases.

"Geez, I am getting all these tests to run a restaurant business... hmm."

He felt great at the end of the day; he received the training, his own business license, and the health certificate.

The deep fried chicken restaurant owner vacated the store, and Gun-Ho paid the remaining 60 million won to him. Before he started renovating the restaurant, he

visited other restaurants right next to him. Both owners were young, about the same age as Gun-Ho. The owner of the restaurant on the left side of Gun-Ho's looked dandy while the owner of the BBQ restaurant on the right side looked like a yakuza; he shaved his head and had a mustache.

"What are you planning to open, sir?"

"Sir?"

Gun-Ho felt weird when the other restaurant owner called him sir.

"I will open a Vietnamese restaurant."

"Oh, pho! I think it sounds good."

The general contractor for renovation arrived on a motorcycle.

"We have to take off all of these and change the ceiling light and floor as well."

"How much do you think it will cost?"

"Let me get the estimate for you."

The general manager came up with an estimate of 12 million won.

"Wow! 12 million! Can we lower the price?"

"It is already the lowest price I could get you, sir! Do you want to skip the floor or wallpaper?"

"Hmm... Okay. 12 million won it is."

The renovation started. The workers carried their tools using a van. The restaurant space was filled with the sound of hammering and grinding. A pile of renovation materials appeared in front of Gun-Ho's restaurant. Gun-Ho came to the restaurant every single day during the entire renovation period.

"Sir, what do you think of this color for the wallpaper?"

"Sir, is it okay with you to install the wall shelf here?"

The renovation workers always called Gun-Ho sir. While Gun-Ho was overseeing the renovation, people in a related business visited him.

"Are you the owner of the restaurant? We provide fresh produce to restaurants. I'd like to have an opportunity to work with you."

"Are you opening a new restaurant here? You look really nice, sir. Why don't you try our rice at your restaurant?"

Gun-Ho was getting used to being called sir as people kept calling him such, and now he realized that he was really opening his own restaurant.

Since smoking was prohibited inside a restaurant, restaurant owners and chefs in the surrounding area came to a restroom in an alley next to Gun-Ho's to smoke. In front of the restroom was their spot for smoking. When Gun-Ho went to that spot to smoke, he saw there the restaurant owner who had a shaved head already smoking.

"How's it going with the renovation?"

"They will finish it by tomorrow. I am so sorry for the noise."

"You will be busy with purchasing kitchen appliances."

"Which store do you recommend for kitchen appliances? What about Namdaemun Market?"

"Namdaemun? Why don't you try Sindang Town? You know there is a market street for kitchen stuff."

"Oh, Sindang Town? I heard there is a good one in Hwanghak Town, but I'm not sure about the exact location though."

"Is this your first time opening a restaurant? They are the same market street. The market street covers Sindang and Hwanghak Town."

"Oh, really?"

"Did you used to have an office job before, sir?"

"Yes, I did. I used to work in Asan City, Chungnam Province. Have you been running your restaurant for a long time?"

"Yes, it has been a while. I studied cooking in Japan."

"Oh, really? You are an expert. You have a very unique hairstyle, by the way."

"Oh, this?"

The restaurant owner with a shaved head and a mustache said while rubbing his bald head,

"I shaved my head on purpose. I didn't want any of my hair to fly around in my kitchen."

Gun-Ho didn't see that coming.

"Wow, he is a professional!"

Gun-Ho thought he would learn a lot from this restaurant owner.

"The restaurant owner next to ours who is neat and slim, he seems to come to his restaurant during the mornings only."

"Oh, him? He has three more restaurants other than this one. He is a very busy man."

"Wow, three more? He seemed to be about our age."

"He is very skillful in business. He started his restaurant business right after graduating from Chungang Commercial University and he already has four restaurants. You saw him riding a foreign luxury car, right?"

Gun-Ho thought that dandy restaurant owner was talented as well.

"Once you get into a field, there are always skillful men in that field."

Gun-Ho thought that there were still plenty of things he needed to learn.

When the interior renovation of his restaurant was almost done, Gun-Ho went to the market street in Sindang Town.

"Wow, these are all kitchen stuff!"

Gun-Ho didn't know that there was a market that was focused on kitchen things.

"I will be able to find any pots I want and any plates I want."

The market street was a long way. He could find all kitchen gadgets for boiling, simmering, deep frying, etc. They carried furniture for restaurants as well. Gun-Ho started off his purchase by getting tables and chairs; he chose a black and red combination.

43 Open a Restaurant in Noryangjin

4

The renovation was finally completed. After placing ten tables with 44 chairs, the restaurant looked good. The restaurant sign hadn't arrived yet. People said hanging a business sign should be the last thing he had to do before opening the restaurant door. He also prepared kitchen appliances and gadgets; there were a lot.

"I forgot to get kitchen cleaning cloths and I need a gas lighter. Oh, I should buy dish detergents and trash bags. What else? Let's get aprons for kitchen workers from Daiso. I asked the next door owner if he knew any Korean Chinese woman who could work in my kitchen. I haven't heard from him yet though."

Gun-Ho searched the Internet to find an employment placement agency in Dongjak District. He called one of them.

"Hello? Is this the Employment agency? I need a kitchen worker lady."

"Do you need her for a day?"

"No, I need someone who can work on a regular basis."

"I don't have anyone yet. If you leave your number, I will let you know once I find someone for you."

Gun-Ho had to find a kitchen worker as soon as possible because his restaurant would open the following day. He went to Daerim Town where he was told that there was a lot of Korean-Chinese living there.

"Wow, this area looks like another country too. All those store signs are written in Chinese!"

Gun-Ho could find many employment agencies, and he knocked on the door of every single one of them. But unfortunately, since it was Sunday, they were all closed. Gun-Ho wrote down their numbers and agency names and came back to

Noryangjin.

Monday came around.

"I really have to find someone who can work in my kitchen. The restaurant sign will be hung today!"

Once the clock hit 9 AM, Gun-Ho started making calls to the employment agencies in Daerim Town; he wrote down their numbers yesterday when he visited the town.

"Is this the Employment agency? I need someone who can work in a restaurant kitchen."

"Do you need them for a day?"

"I need someone who could work every day!"

"Where is the restaurant located?"

"It's in Noryangjin."

"Where in Noryangjin?"

"It's hard to give the direction by phone. If they could come to the Noryangjin Station, I will come and pick them up."

"How many people do you need?"

"I need two people."

"I don't have the right people for you yet. I will give you a call later."

Gun-Ho wanted to call another employment agency. While he was searching for the numbers he stored in his cell phone the other day, the agency he just talked with called him.

"I have two people right now for kitchen work. Can I tell them to go to the Noryangjin Station by 10:30 AM today?"

"Yes. It sounds good."

"Give me your restaurant name and number. These women kitchen worker's names are Ok-Lan Choi and Weol-Hwa Bang."

"Okay."

As Gun-Ho wrote their names down, he giggled. Their names sounded so outdated.

Gun-Ho arrived at the Noryangjin Station at 10:30 AM. He walked up to the second floor where the waiting area was located. There were two old ladies standing. Gun-Ho thought they looked like Korean-Chinese.

"Are you Weol-Hwa Bang by any chance?"

"Oh, are you the owner of the Vietnamese restaurant?"

The ladies looked like they were in their early 60s. He hoped to see someone younger; their age worried him a bit. However, they seemed nice and he didn't have time.

"Is the restaurant far from here?"

"It will take about ten minutes. Do you see the gas station across the street? The restaurant is on the back street behind that gas station."

The women complained about the path leading to the restaurant while following Gun-Ho; it felt like a maze to them.

"I am not sure if I can find the restaurant tomorrow morning when I have to come by myself."

"We are almost there. You will see the restaurant once you make a turn after the pharmacy over there."

Gun-Ho saw a truck in front of his restaurant when he arrived with the two ladies.

"They are probably here for the restaurant sign!"

The truck seemed to have just arrived. The workers were unloading things from

their truck.

Gun-Ho took the ladies to the kitchen.

"We will open tomorrow, but let's try to make some noodle soup for practice. Do you know how to cook pho?"

"Of course. We have cooked pho when we were in China. By the way, do you have a hat here?"

"A hat? What hat?"

"You know the hat you wear in a kitchen so your hair won't fly around."

"Oh, that hat. I will get you the hat. Let's cook without a hat for today."

Gun-Ho didn't know he had to prepare hats before working in a kitchen. There were tons of tedious things he had to prepare.

"How much do we get paid? And how many hours do we work?"

Gun-Ho had already asked the restaurant owners next to him about the pay and work hours of kitchen worker ladies. Gun-Ho offered about the same deal to the ladies.

"The work starts at 10 AM until 10 PM. Since the restaurant will stay open for those hours I decided the work schedule like that. The subway will be operational during those hours, so it shouldn't cause any transportation problems for you."

"Alright. That sounds good. Do we get a day off twice a month?"

"Yes, twice a month. And the monthly payment will be 1,900,000 won."

"We used to get 2,000,000 won in our previous workplace."

"Okay then. 2 million per month."

The ladies were very experienced. They didn't need to be told what to do in the kitchen. They knew what to prepare and how to prepare it. They cooked the noodles by placing them in the boiling water; they prepared onions and leeks

proficiently. The way they prepared the meat was amazing. It seemed like Gun-Ho would be disturbing their work if he stayed in the kitchen.

"There were so many things missing in this kitchen. I will tell you what we need. Can you write them down?"

The ladies made a long list, and most of them were something that Gun-Ho had never thought of. Fortunately, Gun-Ho didn't have to go to that market in Sindang Town to buy the things on the list. He could find them in Daiso or a local hardware store.

"Sir, could you come over here and take a look at the restaurant sign?"

Gun-Ho ran to the main entrance when he heard the restaurant name was up. The restaurant looked beautiful with its name hanging. Gun-Ho could hear a few pedestrians—probably exam takers—talking, "Uh? It's a pho restaurant. Let's come here later for our lunch today."

Gun-Ho felt delighted.

"Nice. Exam takers seem to like Vietnamese noodles. I guess all I need to do from now on is to collect all the money."

The neighboring restaurant owners came to see Gun-Ho's restaurant with the restaurant sign up.

"It looks good. Do you open tomorrow?"

"Yes, I do."

"I will definitely stop by for my meal."

"Thank you."

The standing signboard arrived in the afternoon. It was placed beside the main entrance. A customer entered the restaurant; he probably thought the restaurant was already open.

"I'm sorry. We will open tomorrow."

Gun-Ho felt confident that he would easily sell 300 pho per day.

"I am going to sell the noodle soup for 3,500 won, so if I could sell 300 of them per day, I will make 1,050,000 won on a daily basis. That allowed me to make 31,500,000 won per month! Let's not forget to take account of expenses: 10,000,000 won for ingredients, 4,000,000 for labor, 1,600,000 for the rent, and additional 1,000,000 won to cover any miscellaneous expenses. If subtracting all these expenses, the monthly profit will be 14,000,000 won per month!"

Gun-Ho was so excited.

"Maybe I could sell 400 per day."

Gun-Ho started calculating with the calculator on his smartphone.

"Monthly sales are 42,000,000 won! Then I will make 20,000,000 won profit per month! Wow, I don't have to be envious of those executives in a big company!"

Gun-Ho felt like he was floating on air.

The following day, Gun-Ho finally opened his restaurant.

The general contractor who renovated Gun-Ho's restaurant and the store that delivered fresh produce to the restaurant sent congratulatory flower wreaths; they were displayed in front of the restaurant. A moment later, an orchid plant arrived. It was from Jong-Suk from Yangju City.

"Two flower wreaths and one orchid plant in front of the main entrance certainly add a vivid vibe to the restaurant!"

Gun-Ho couldn't stop smiling. At that moment, he received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro! Congratulations! I will stop by after work."

"You don't have to. It's too far from you. I received the orchid plant you sent. Thank you."

Gun-Ho felt very encouraged. He was now a restaurant owner expecting to make a lot of money.

44 Open a Restaurant in Noryangjin

5

On the grand opening day of his restaurant, Gun-Ho shaved neatly and wore clean clothes.

The kitchen worker ladies came to the restaurant at 10 AM and started cooking noodles and preparing seasonings for the soup. At 11 AM everything was ready. Gun-Ho worked at the hall.

At 11:30 AM, customers started coming in. At noon, the restaurant was filled with people and newly coming customers had to wait in line to be seated. It was a very hectic day for Gun-Ho. He processed payments, cleaned the tables after the customers were done eating and etc. He didn't even have the time to smoke or drink water. The ladies in the kitchen seemed to be having fun on their own; they constantly prepared noodles one after another and simmering the soup.

It became slow at around 2 PM. According to Gun-Ho's calculation, roughly about 100 customers came until then.

"I should have started this business a long time ago. The BBQ restaurant next door is also teeming with people especially in the evening. However, their table turnover rate is too long. On the other hand, in my restaurant customers eat—more like drink—noodle soup in no time, so our restaurant has a short table turnover rate. I'm not sure who picked the pho for the menu, whoever it is, he is a genius." Gun-Ho was self-praising.

Around 3 PM, not many customers were in the restaurant. Gun-Ho went to that smoking spot to smoke. There was the next door restaurant owner with shaved head smoking.

"It seems like your restaurant is doing very well."

"For lunch only, I got 100 customers."

"That's great. You will experience another crowd pouring into the restaurant after

5."

"Do you think there will be as many customers as lunchtime during dinner time?"

"Of course. Since dinner time is longer than lunchtime, you will have more customers."

"Then, I'd better order more onions and meat now."

"Congratulations. It will go on like that for a week. That's the beauty of a new opening. You need to pay attention after a week though."

"Really?"

"If you raise the sales or maintain the same level as now even after a week, then it is a success. However, if the sales decrease after a week, you will face difficulty in running the restaurant afterward. Well, you will be fine since the Vietnamese pho is an easy and quick stop for customers."

As the shaved-head restaurant owner predicted, customers poured into Gun-Ho's restaurant after 5 PM. That evening, Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho who was running a bar in Gyeongridan Street also stopped by Gun-Ho's restaurant; they brought toilet papers for Gun-Ho's new place.

"Wow, there are a lot of people here."

"Bro, congratulations. The restaurant is pretty and you got lots of customers. Let us have pho too. It's on me."

"I can't take your money, bro."

"What are you talking about? Even though we are close enough to share things, business is business. You have to take my money for your business."

"Haha, if you insist."

"Uh? Bro! You seemed to lose a lot of weight."

"That's right. You look slimmer than the last time I saw you."

Suk-Ho added in surprise.

"You lost weight because you had been too busy preparing your new business. I had gone through the same experience when I had opened my bar in Gyeongridan Street."

Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk had their pho.

"You guys came this far for me. I am sorry that I couldn't treat you better, like with alcohol."

"Don't be silly! We came to congratulate you, not to have a drink."

"How is it?"

"Well... I am not so sure since this is Vietnamese noodles."

Gun-Ho approached one of the customers who looked like an exam preparer and asked, "How do you like it? Is it good?"

"Yes, it's okay."

The customer responded positively. However, he didn't even finish half of the noodle soup.

Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk got up from their seats to leave.

"Why are you leaving so early? Stay longer."

"Nah, you have to take more customers. We can't hold the seats. We will leave now."

"I am sorry I couldn't spend more time with you here."

"Let's have a drink when you're not that busy anymore. Perhaps we can have some soju in this restaurant by then."

"Sure. Make sure you don't forget to come, okay? Let me treat you then."

Suk-Ho was heading out when he turned around and said, "You are getting a lot of customers today because it is a new opening day. You have to remember the

days after a week from now is crucial. Give the customers enough yellow pickled radishes, and if a customer wants more cilantro then don't hesitate to give them more."

"Okay, I will. Thank you for the tips."

After 9 PM, it became slow. The restaurants next door were crowded, probably because they were serving alcohols as well.

At 10 PM, the kitchen worker ladies were getting ready to leave for the day.

"Thank you for today."

"You have been very busy and must be tired, sir. We will see you tomorrow."

After 10 PM the ladies were already gone; it was time to close the restaurant. Gun-Ho closed the front door, turned off half of the lights, and started calculating how much he made today. Including cash and credit card payments, he made 840,000 won.

"Hmm... so I sold 240 pho today."

Gun-Ho calculated it again and again.

"If I can maintain the same level of sales as today, I can make 25,200,000 won per month! If I subtract expenses for ingredients and labor, the profit will be 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 won. It's about an executive's salary in a big company."

Gun-Ho cleaned up the restaurant and turned off all the lights. Half of the payments were in cash so he put them in his bag and walked out of the restaurant. He could feel a cool breeze.

"I felt exhausted since it was the first day. Let's get some beer and snacks on the way home; I deserved it since I made some money today."

Gun-Ho bought beer, dried squid, and peanuts on the way home and walked towards home while swinging his bag.

The following day was also a hectic day. However, the number of customers decreased a bit. About 200 customers came to Gun-Ho's restaurant on the second

day. On the third day, some jerk posted a bad review on the Internet saying the new Vietnamese restaurant pho sucked. Maybe because of that negative review, Gun-Ho received only 150 customers that day.

"Was I getting lots of customers in the beginning just because it was a newly opened restaurant?"

Gun-Ho was getting worried. The kitchen ladies seemed to be concerned as well. As they were getting fewer customers, the more free time the ladies got; they spent the time joking at each other. On Friday and Saturday, the exam preparers, who made up a customer base in the area, seemed to choose restaurants that served alcohol; Gun-Ho's restaurant had only a few of them. On the other hand, the dandy-looking restaurant owner next door to Gun-Ho's was getting tons of customers in those days. The restaurant was teeming with people at night.

"Your restaurant is doing really well."

Gun-Ho told that to the dandy-looking owner when he saw him on the way back from the restroom. The dandy-looking owner just smiled and went back into his restaurant.

A week after Gun-Ho's restaurant's opening, he received around 70 customers per day. Except for bad weather days or weekends. Most of the time about 70 customers visited Gun-Ho's restaurant constantly.

"With the sales of 70, I will make a little over 7,000,000 won per month, which is not enough. If I deduct the expenses of ingredients of 400, labor, and the rent, I won't earn anything. I don't think my pho is any less delicious than the one across the street. I don't get it."

Gun-Ho grappled to find a way to improve the situation; he eventually decided to let one of the kitchen ladies go.

"Whew..."

Gun-Ho felt embarrassed. He was embarrassed to see the neighbor restaurant owners, to see the building owner, and to see Suk-Ho, his friend running a bar in Gyeongridan Street, and to see Jong-Suk.

Even though there was only one kitchen lady working in the kitchen, he had to

do what he had to do. He cleaned the restaurant every morning before the kitchen lady came, and he ordered and received fresh ingredients; he threw out trash bags and cleaned the restaurant at the end of the day.

"I am okay with all these physical work as long as I make money. The problem is that I work hard all day long for nothing."

After three months, Gun-Ho finally gave in. He put the restaurant on the market. He smoked more often outside the restaurant. While Gun-Ho was smoking in front of the restroom outside, as usual, he saw the restaurant owner with a shaved head.

"I heard you put your restaurant on the market."

"That's right. I couldn't keep up like this any longer. I don't get enough customers."

"Was there anyone interested in your restaurant?"

"Nah. No one has even come to see it yet. Perhaps because my price is too high?"

"How much did you ask?"

"I paid 95 million won and invested an additional 12 million for renovation, so I asked 110 million won to be fair."

"110,000,000 won? Umm, it won't sell at that price. The beer bar across the street put their store on the market for 100 million won. Their property is larger than yours."

Gun-Ho was getting anxious and scared.

45 Going to China 1

It had been a month already since Gun-Ho put his restaurant on the market, and no one came to take a look at the property. Gun-Ho went to the realtor's office to talk to him.

"Why is no one coming to see my restaurant? Stores in Noryangjin are supposed to sell quickly since the area is very well established for business. What's going on?"

"The market is slow now probably because the New Year's Day is coming. You have to be patient."

That was all Gun-Ho could hear from the realtor as a valid explanation. Gun-Ho was anxious. The more time passed by, the more money he was wasting.

"I help the kitchen work and clean the toilet every day for nothing. I am wasting my f*cking life here. When I worked in a factory, even though the work was hard, I got paid every month. What am I doing here? The more days I work here, the more money I waste. Sh*t! F*ck!"

Gun-Ho requested another realtor for selling his restaurant. He was thinking of putting it on the Internet as well. To make the situation worse, the kitchen lady was not helping. Since she was aware that the restaurant would be closed anytime soon, and she would lose her job then. She didn't work as hard as before. She had even made Gun-Ho work more by asking him to do additional work.

"Please throw this trash out."

"Please turn on that light."

Gun-Ho felt like she was ordering him to do things, and it certainly didn't feel good. Gun-Ho was smoking outside when the shaved-head restaurant owner joined him.

"Did you sell your restaurant?"

"No one was even coming to see it."

"Try this. Tell the realtor that you will give him some incentive. He will try harder."

Gun-Ho wondered why he didn't come up with that idea earlier. The realtor was actually as cunning as a fox.

"Son of a b*tch! He had told me when I made the contract for this restaurant that it was a steal, and now he isn't even trying to sell."

Gun-Ho bought a box of juice and went to the realtor's office, and he told the realtor that he would pay a high incentive in addition to the realtor commission fee. Shortly after Gun-Ho's visit to the realtor's office, the realtor started bringing potential buyers to the restaurant.

The realtor suggested to price the restaurant at 95 million won, the same price Gun-Ho had paid when he had bought it. By doing so, Gun-Ho would lose his additional investment of 12 million won that he spent for the renovation.

"Sir, if you don't sell it for 95 million won now, you will keep losing money every day."

Gun-Ho at first wanted to wait for someone who was willing to pay the full price that Gun-Ho was asking for to appear, but he was getting sick and tired of that restaurant business. He didn't want to waste any of his life any longer without getting paid while cleaning the toilet and doing kitchen chores. He eventually decided to sell it for 95 million won. He agreed to vacate the restaurant within a week.

"I ended up losing a lot of money, but let's try to empty my mind."

Gun-Ho somewhat felt better after he made a contract to sell his restaurant despite the loss he had to bear. He went to his usual smoking spot and saw the shaved-head owner there.

"I guess we feel the urge to smoke at a similar time."

"Haha, I guess so. Did you sell the restaurant?"

"Yes, finally I did. I am leaving within a week."

"That's nice. You have been suffering a lot."

"I feel better now."

"So what are you going to do after you sell the restaurant?"

"I want to take some time off to be recharged."

"If you don't have any specific plan yet, can I suggest something? There is a Chinese restaurant available if you are interested."

"Chinese restaurant like selling Jajangmyeon*?"

"No, I am talking about a restaurant in China."

"In China? I don't even speak Chinese."

"You don't have to. You can use an interpreter; it's not a problem at all. That's actually my uncle's restaurant. The restaurant is doing fine, but my uncle wants to move back to Korea and he needs to sell that restaurant before he could do so."

"Where in China?"

"It's in Hangzhou City next to Shanghai."

"What kind of restaurant is it?"

"It's actually a Korean restaurant. My uncle had used to work as a manager in a big company, and he opened that restaurant after his retirement. So, are you interested?"

"I don't know. I am tired of a restaurant business. I just want to take a rest for now."

The shaved-hair restaurant owner came into Gun-Ho's restaurant when Gun-Ho was sitting on a chair in his restaurant while staring at the refrigerator and the water heater thinking how much he could sell them.

"My uncle is coming to Korea the day after tomorrow from China. Would you like to meet him? Why don't you take a trip to China after you close your restaurant? You can take a rest there. I don't mean to push you to take over that restaurant in China. I am just telling you this because it is a good opportunity. You can acquire a large restaurant with the same amount of money you spent on this one."

"Haha. Well, okay. I'll meet your uncle once he arrives. Why wouldn't I?"

"My uncle will stop by my restaurant once he comes to Korea. At that time, I will bring him here, so you can meet with him. I don't want you to feel imposed."

"Haha, that's quite alright. I will see your uncle then."

Gun-Ho was thinking about closing the restaurant right away since he already sold the restaurant, and then he changed his mind.

"I have to pay the rent anyway whether I close it now or later. Let's keep it open until the last day I promised to vacate it."

Gun-Ho was gazing outside the window from his restaurant hall. The kitchen lady was talking on her cell phone. As he thought more about his failure in this restaurant business, he felt more embarrassed.

"That dandy-looking owner keeps smiling at me whenever he sees me. I feel like he is laughing at me. I'm offended by that!"

He felt like he disappointed Jong-Suk in Yangju and Suk-Ho in Gyeongridan Street.

"I am so embarrassed. Good thing is, I didn't tell my parents about this restaurant."

Gun-Ho grabbed the mini calculator placed on the counter and started calculating.

"Renovation, realtor fee, kitchen appliances, tables, and chairs... F*ck! I threw out 20 million won."

Gun-Ho, let out a deep sigh.

"If I invested the entire 500 million won I had into this restaurant business, I would have lost probably 100 million won. If a retiring man in his 50s went through the same thing I did, it would have been a huge problem. I don't have any dependents, but they have children who go to college; they also have to make a living for the family."

Putting himself in their shoes for a second made him terrified.

Gun-Ho was dozing off in a chair in the restaurant since there was no customer at all when the next door restaurant owner with a shaved head came into the restaurant. He was with someone.

"Sir, this is my uncle I talked to you about the other day."

The uncle person smiled as he extended his hand for a handshake. He seemed to be in his late 50s and he was tall. He didn't look like a business person maybe because he spent more of his life working in an office rather than running a business.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo. Please have a seat."

"So, you sold your restaurant? If you are, by any chance, interested in running a Korean restaurant in China, please come visit us. In China, you don't need a large amount of money to buy a restaurant. If you invested about the same amount you spent on this restaurant, you could get a big one in China."

"How big is your restaurant in China?"

"It's about 100 pyung. It shares the same building with a hotel. You can acquire it for 50 million won."

"That cheap?"

"In China, security deposit and premium are not required. Instead, you make the whole payment up front for the period you rent."

"The entire amount?"

"Yes, instead of a security deposit, you pay the one year period rent in a lump sum."

"Hmmm..."

"Why don't you just take a vacation in China and come visit us. Take a look and make a decision then. You have to first like it to acquire it, right? Haha."

"When are you going back to China, sir?"

"I am leaving in three to four days. If you are interested, you can tell my nephew."

"Sounds good. I will be busy tomorrow in vacating this restaurant, so I will let you know around the day after tomorrow."

"Okay. No problem. And if you don't have a passport, you'd better make one now. If you take your passport and the business license before you close your restaurant to a travel agency, they can help you get your business visa to China with one-year duration."

Note*

Jajangmyeon - Korean style Chinese noodle in black bean sauce

46 Going to China 2

Gun-Ho decided to make a trip to China once his restaurant was sold.

"Come to think of it, I've never been outside of the country."

Gun-Ho had never had a chance or money to travel abroad because his family and himself hadn't had money for it while many of his friends took a trip overseas to study English or to do volunteer work abroad.

"I already have my passport. I applied for it with Jong-Suk when I was in Pocheon working in a factory. We, at that time, talked about working in Australia or Canada because we heard that we could make a lot of money doing welding over there. I guess I can make use of it this time."

Gun-Ho took his passport along with his business license to a travel agency close to the Noryangjin Station. He paid the agency fee, and they told him to come back after three days and pick his passport up.

Gun-Ho left the refrigerator and water heater in the restaurant because the new owner wanted to buy them.

"They were very expensive when I bought them, but when I sold them their prices are like the price of a chewing gum."

Even so, Gun-Ho thought it was not a bad deal. It was better than nothing after all.

After he handed over his restaurant, he had nothing to do. When he was running the restaurant, he couldn't even dream about going out to have fun or meet with friends because he just didn't have the time for it.

"Let's go see a movie."

For the first time in a long time, Gun-Ho went to the CGV movie theater close to the Yongsan Station and watched a movie. After that, he stopped by a PC room to play computer games. It only took him a day to feel bored playing computer games.

"Even though I lost 20 million won from the restaurant in Noryangjin, I still have my seed money of 480 million won. What do I want to do now? Oh, I have to let him know whether I would go to China or not. Let me first ask the travel agency if my visa is ready to be picked up."

The travel agency said his visa was ready when he called them, and he could pick it up in the morning on the following day.

Once he received confirmation about his visa from the travel agency, Gun-Ho made a call to the BBQ restaurant owner with a shaved head in Noryangjin.

"Hi, I'm Gun-Ho Goo, the one who used to run the Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant next door. Could you tell your uncle that I'd like to come and visit his restaurant in China? I already got my visa."

"Oh, really? I will tell him right away."

The shaved-head owner's uncle called Gun-Ho.

"Sir? So are you going to China? You made the right decision. I will make a reservation for your flight. Please text me your name and your name in English as well."

Gun-Ho sent him a text with his name in Korean and English. Then the uncle called him again.

"Let's meet at the Gimpo International Airport after two days. The flight leaves at 2 PM. You need to arrive at the airport an hour early. For the flight cost, you can pay in credit card, but I recommend you to prepare 200,000-300,000 won in cash. You might need it in China. Bring your suitcase and wear comfortable clothes. I will see you at the waiting area in front of the currency exchange booth."

"I will see you then."

Once he got off the phone with the uncle, Gun-Ho called Jong-Suk.

"Jong-Suk? It's me. I sold my restaurant."

"You did? I'm sorry to hear that, bro. I was hoping for you to succeed in the

restaurant business. Did you lose a lot?"

"A little. Not an amount I have to terribly worry about. And I am going to China the day after tomorrow."

"China?"

"There is a restaurant I want to see. So I'm just taking a vacation there."

"You don't even speak Chinese, bro. What's your plan?"

"They said I could use an interpreter and I don't have to speak Chinese to run a restaurant there. I will tell the details once I come back."

"Did you say you are leaving the day after tomorrow? Then you are free tomorrow, right? Tomorrow is Sunday. Let's go fishing. I went to the Pocheon fishing site last week by myself and saw Chairman Lee there."

"Really? He is still going there."

"He asked me how you were doing, and why you didn't come fishing any longer. Why don't you go there with me tomorrow? Let's drink soju."

"I have to buy a travel suitcase."

"Just get a bag or something. Buy it today!"

"Okay. I will be there tomorrow at 10 AM."

Gun-Ho went to the fishing site; it had been a while. Seoul was too busy for Gun-Ho. Once he arrived at the quiet Pocheon City, Gun-Ho felt like he could breathe better. It was late fall and Cosmos flowers started falling down; dragonflies were still flying in the sky.

"Very nice. I love the nature in my country."

Gun-Ho walked down to the reservoir, carrying his fishing rod. Jong-Suk was waving at Gun-Ho at the reservoir; he must have arrived earlier.

"Hey, Jong-Suk! Good to see you, bro."

"Bro, I'm happy to see you. Enjoy this day and forget about that Noryangjin restaurant thing."

"I'm trying, man. I don't see Chairman Lee."

"I don't see him either. There are two men fishing over there. Do you think it's them?"

"Did they change their fishing spot?"

"Let's go there to say hi, and come back to our spot."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk walked to the other side to see if Chairman Lee was there. The two men fishing on that side were Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon.

"Hi!"

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo and Mr. Jong-Suk Park!"

"You still remember our names."

"Of course. How can I forget the person with ShinWangJaeWang fate!"

"I'm sorry?"

"I'm just saying it. I heard you moved to Noryangjin from Asan to run a restaurant."

"I sold it already."

"Oh, really? You made the right decision. Running a restaurant is supposed to be your last one in your life."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You only run a restaurant business once you've failed all other businesses, meaning that running a restaurant requires that much experience. That's why running a restaurant is very difficult."

"It was hard. That's for sure."

"You only open a restaurant if you can open it in a corporation form with chain restaurants, or with your family. A restaurant business requires a large amount of labor, so you need family members' support to succeed. It's really hard to succeed if you run it by yourself. Now, what are you going to do?"

"I haven't decided on anything yet. Someone wants to show me a restaurant in China so I'm planning to travel to China for a vacation."

"China..."

Chairman Lee retrieved his fishing rod to change the bait, and he said to himself while gazing at the fishing float that was floating on the water.

"The ShinWangJaeWang fate is leading him there."

Gun-Ho had no idea what Chairman Lee meant, so he just pretended he didn't hear anything.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, you said you worked at a company in Asan and worked in accounting. How long did it last?"

"For accounting work, I worked in Yangju for six months and for four months in Asan."

"Are the companies still using the B2B payment system?"

"Yes, they are."

"Sons of b*tches!"

"Huh?"

Gun-Ho was frightened because he never expected to hear that sort of cursing word from Chairman Lee; he seemed to be a perfect gentleman. Chairman Lee smiled and looked at Gun-Ho.

"I apologize. I couldn't suppress the urge!"

"Do you have any particular reason or story for saying that?"

Chairman Lee sighed lightly and started reeling off a story slowly.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, I actually worked as a hard money lender in the Myeongdong area when I was young."

"Oh, I see..."

"At that time, there was no such thing as a B2B payment system. The accounting staff in each company came to me with their promissory note whenever they needed money. The line was long. We quickly grasped their credit rating; we were quicker than banks. Bank branch managers often asked me about a company's credit rating. Knowing a company's credit rating was critical because that was the base to determine the interest rate for that company."

"Oh, I see."

"The company in Asan, what was the early payment discount rate there?"

"It was 4.5%."

"A*sholes! They are doing good."

"I'm sorry?"

"The companies that needed money came to me—I was the big player in Myeongdong's hard money market—with their promissory note, and just like banks do now, we took our fee and gave them discounted cash. It was called promissory note Warikkang. I made a lot of money doing it. I almost swept money into my pocket. Once the banks realized that we were making a lot of money that way, they made it into a bank service and took it away from us."

"Oh..., I see."

Gun-Ho learned new facts.

47 Going to China 3

Chairman Lee continued talking.

"The hard money lenders at that time suffered a bitter blow when the banks took the promissory note discount service that they had been providing to companies. That was the reason why I quit the hard money lending business and moved to the real estate investment business. I went to Apgujeong Town, Gangnam District in Seoul and started investing in condos. The condos in Gangnam were already selling at a high price, but I was certain that people would be willing to pay even more for those condos. I was sure about it because I knew that people preferred the convenient location of Gangnam, and they also had a desire to show off that they were living in a nice community—the Gangnam area."

"You must have made a fortune from that investment."

"I did. But then the IMF happened."

"Gosh, you must have lost a lot then."

"No, actually I didn't."

Chairman Lee wagged his head.

"I was actually so excited because it could be a huge opportunity to make big money."

"Huh? During the IMF crisis?"

"Right before the IMF crisis, the officials in the Ministry of Economy and Finance saw the signs of an upcoming financial crisis in this country. They, however, denied their awareness by stating that our economy was fundamentally strong. I had been in the money market for too long to believe them and I had the opposite view. By that time, I had already liquidated my assets; I sold dozens of condos I owned in Apgujeong Town along with all of the promissory notes I was holding. I believed the only way I could survive was by securing cash."

"I see."

"Once the Korean economy began to experience the financial crisis, the building owners who couldn't handle the interest rate hikes started putting their buildings on the market, and many companies with significant debts went bankrupt. At that time, I acquired the 25 billion won building in Cheongdam Town.

"Oh, I see."

Manager Gweon and Jong-Suk were listening intently to Chairman Lee's story while sitting next to him.

"Guess how much that building is worth today."

"Um, I don't know. Maybe 30 billion won? 40 billion won?"

"It is now worth 200 billion won."

"200 billion won!" Gun-Ho gasped in astonishment.

"The rent income from that building was substantial. One day, a branch manager of a bank came to me and offered a loan of 100 billion won since I didn't have any debt. He then asked me to take over a building that the bank had seized for a defaulted loan; the bank was about to put that building up for sale. I took a 60 billion won of loan out of the 100 billion won loan they initially suggested and took over a paper production company for 40 billion won. With the remaining 20 billion won, I bought the small building."

"I see."

"The reason why I acquired the paper production company was that... The delivery business was being developed in Korea at that time and I thought the delivery business would make substantial use of packaging boxes which are made of corrugated cardboard. Additionally, my son was about to return from studying in the U.S. and I wanted to give him a company he could run. I already paid off the loan of 60 billion won. That paper production company continuously grew and now its asset exceeds 100 billion won, and the small building is worth about 70 billion won now."

Gun-Ho, Jong-Suk and Manager Gweon had gasped in astonishment and admiration.

"Now, I have no desire to amass any more money, and I'm just spending my time fishing like this. Promissory notes or real estate investments are no longer a good way to make money these days. As banks took over the promissory note business with their B2B payment system, the government is taking the profits from the real estate investment by collecting so many taxes by the name of a transfer tax and an excess profits tax. A person born to a poor family might find it impossible to move up the economic ladder because the economic ladder became way steeper than it used to be. It could solidify the economic inequality in our society."

"Whew."

The three people let a deep sigh simultaneously as they listened to Chairman Lee's story.

"Do you know why I am telling you all these stories today? I usually don't talk much."

"I don't know."

"I am telling you these stories because Mr. Gun-Ho Goo is going to China."

"Huh? I haven't decided anything yet. I'm going there just to see how it is."

"I am not an expert in running a business, but I've heard that a lot of Korean companies expanded their business to China and failed. Moreover, many Korean business people became victim of fraud there. There is something very clear though."

"Huh? What is it?"

"The real estate."

"Real estate?"

"What is China's economic growth rate? Almost 10% right? It's 30% for three years. The real estate market and a country's economic growth are closely related. If a housing boom occurs in addition to the economic growth, the real estate prices will rise significantly."

"Then the real estate price in China will keep increasing, right?"

"No."

Chairman Lee shook his head from side to side.

"If the real estate price goes up continuously, the Chinese government will pull out their sword to intervene, just like our country. The government would want to develop the source of tax revenue and they don't want the economic inequality to be intensified. Chinese real estate market is going through a golden age right now. You might not hit a jackpot there, but it will cover the economic growth. You want to pay attention to the market."

Gun-Ho almost said, 'I don't have money to invest in a real estate market.' Chairman Lee seemed like he knew everything. If Gun-Ho said so, Chairman Lee might reply this to him 'You made your money when you worked in accounting by using inappropriately the company's funds.' Gun-Ho was scared to hear that from him.

"Haha. I will keep that in mind. Thank you for telling me your story, sir."

"I've got a bite!"

Chairman Lee reeled in the fish.

The sun was about to set. Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon left for home. Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk laid out a picnic mat on the grass and started drinking. Jong-Suk said as he poured the soju in his paper cup, "Sometimes I don't understand Chairman Lee. He knows that we both have no money. Why does he keep saying we need to pay attention to the real estate market?"

"Haha. Yeah. Weird."

As Gun-Ho was responding to Suk-Ho, he talked to himself while he poured the soju in his paper cup.

'Wow. Chairman Lee is something. He knows everything, I mean literally everything. He is on a whole different level.'

Gun-Ho went to Gimpo International Airport and met the shaved-head restaurant

owner's uncle.

"I already reserved a hotel for you."

"Oh, the hotel in China? Isn't it expensive?"

"It's a three-star hotel. The price is about the same as a motel in Korea."

"Okay. Thank you."

"Oh, and I believe I didn't give you my name. I'm Hee-Yeol Byeon. I had worked in L Group for a long time before I retired three years ago."

"Oh, really? How did you start the restaurant in China then?"

"The location of the last branch office of L Group that I worked for is in Shanghai. After retiring, I started my own business and then I blew most of my retirement pay because of some sort of fraud. It left me with 50 million won, so I acquired that restaurant in Hangzhou City with it."

"Oh, I see."

"I've heard that you used to work in a company before too."

"Right. Not long though. I used to work at an electronic assembly company in Asan."

"Oh, so you were not a business person."

"No. The restaurant in Noyrangjin was my first business experience. You can talk to me in a more informal way; you are way older than me."

"Well... If you haven't exchanged your money yet, you can do so here."

"How much do you think I should exchange?"

"200,000 -300,000 won should be good. It's up to you. Today's exchange rate is displayed on the electronic board over there."

Gun-Ho exchanged 300,000 won with Chinese Yuan. The current exchange rate from Korean Won to Chinese Yuan at that time was 120:1. Gun-Ho received

2,500 Yuan.

Gun-Ho boarded the plane to China. Everything seemed marvelous to him.

"Wow. I am on board. I guess I achieved a certain level of success in my life! Even though I lost 20 million won in Noryangjin!"

The plane took off and Gun-Ho couldn't take his eyes off from outside the window even though all he could see was the clouds, and they looked like cotton candies. Gun-Ho looked at Hee-Yeol Byun in the next seat and he was dozing off; he must be very tired.

48 Going to China 4

The plane Gun-Ho was on landed at Hongqiao International Airport in Shanghai, China.

Gun-Ho became busy looking at the surroundings such as buildings and business signs once he got off the plane.

"Is this your first time in China?"

"Huh? Oh, yes, it's my first time."

"This airport is an old airport like Gimpo International Airport in our country. There is a new airport in Pudong, just like Incheon International Airport in Korea. That's why a flight leaving Incheon lands in Pudong, and a flight leaving Gimpo lands in Hongquiao."

"Oh, I see."

"Since this airport has been here for a long time, you can find Korean restaurants and Korean consulate in this area. The branch offices of many Korean banks such as Industrial Bank of Korea and Kookmin Bank for Shanghai are all located here as well."

Mr. Byeon showed Gun-Ho the Korean consulate and the Korean bank branch offices.

"I chose this flight route to this location for our trip because you might use this airport frequently in the future. We actually have an airport close to Hangzhou City where my restaurant is located and that would be the fastest route to get to the restaurant. However, I chose this airport for your future convenience."

Gun-Ho didn't pay too much attention to what Mr. Byeon had said. He was too busy looking at the people on the street and the buildings in the area.

"We can take an express bus here to Hangzhou City. It takes about two hours."

Mr. Byeon took Gun-Ho to the express bus terminal. The terminal looked similar

to the one in the province in Korea.

"Hangzhou City is like a state capital. You can think of it as a city where a provincial government is located. It could be Daegu City or Gwangju City in Korea."

The express bus looked the same as the one in Korea. After passing by a huge Canola flower field, they arrived at Hangzhou City; it was already after sunset. Hangzhou was a big city like Shanghai. Gun-Ho and Mr. Byeon took a taxi after getting off the bus. Mr. Byeon was fluent in Chinese. He said something to the taxi driver, and the driver nodded his head.

"I told him we want to go to Mando Hotel located in Haebang road. My restaurant is located on the 8th floor in the same building."

"8th floor?"

Gun-Ho frowned as soon as he heard 8th floor. Gun-Ho thought the first floor was a better location for high foot traffic. 'Can they get customers on the 8th floor?' Gun-Ho thought. Mr. Byeon explained when he sensed Gun-Ho's disappointment about the location of the restaurant.

"The restaurant has an excellent view from the 8th floor. In addition, it is one of the few Korean restaurants in Hangzhou City, so we do get many customers even if it is on the 8th floor including tourist customers in a group occasionally."

Gun-Ho thought tourist groups should be very good customers for a restaurant. However, the fact that he couldn't speak Chinese bothered him. He had to rely on Mr. Byeon for every single thing.

They arrived at Mando Hotel. It was not a huge hotel but looked cozy. Gun-Ho had seen other hotels from their taxi ride on their way here; they were all big, unlike this Mando Hotel. Gun-Ho and Mr. Byeon went up to the 8th floor in the elevator. There was a standing signboard that said 'Korean Restaurant' written in Chinese inside the elevator.

As Gun-Ho and Mr. Byeon entered into the restaurant, the restaurant staff greeted them without bowing though. No one even slightly bent their head to greet them. They all said something in Chinese, which Gun-Ho couldn't understand at all. Gun-Ho looked around and he was amazed.

"The restaurant is very large and clean maybe because it is located in the same building as a hotel. Even the floor was carpeted."

Gun-Ho had a hard time believing this large and clean restaurant is only 50 million won. He then realized when he was about to leave the restaurant that he wouldn't get anything since there was no security deposit required.

"That means I have to make a profit and save that profit up during the whole time I'm running the restaurant. If I look at it that way, 50 million won is not cheap."

The restaurant had about 20 tables, and only two of them were occupied at that time. Mr. Byeon asked Gun-Ho to sit and wait for him in the backside of the restaurant. Mr. Byeon started talking with the staff. It seemed like the restaurant staff was reporting the things that happened during Mr. Byeon's absence. After a moment, Mr. Byeon came to Gun-Ho with a lady who looked like in her mid-20s.

"She is one of our staff; she is doing interpretation too."

"I'm Mae-Hyang Kim." She spoke in Korean.

She extended her hand for a handshake with a smile. She seemed like a Korean living in China.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Mr. Byeon then said as Gun-Ho and Mae-Hyang shook their hands,

"We have eight staff in total here. Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim is our serving staff, and she also does the interpreting. I don't ask her often for interpreting, but if you take over this restaurant, you will probably need her pretty often for interpreting. She is a very good interpreter."

Gun-Ho looked at Mae-Hyang again.

"Are you a Korean Chinese by any chance?"

"That's right."

Mae-Hyang responded with a smile on her round face. She had a bit of an outdated style but she was cute.

"Who is the cashier? Mr. Byeon, are you the one who is handling money?"

"No. We have a local lady from here in Hangzhou City. Do you see the lady over there who is taking payment from a customer?"

"Oh, I see."

"I've reserved your room in this hotel for your convenience. Your room is downstairs, number 706. Here is the room key. I've already talked to the hotel manager to give you a discounted price for your room."

"Haha, I appreciate it."

"Why don't you unpack your luggage in your room and change clothes before dinner. I will meet you in the lobby after an hour. Let's have dinner in the Chinese restaurant across the street."

"That sounds great."

The hotel was small but it had everything it needed. The room was as good as a newly constructed motel in a province in Korea. Gun-Ho took a shower and walked out of the bathroom.

"Oh, TV is here."

Gun-Ho turned on the TV.

A Chinese news anchor was talking in Chinese on TV. Gun-Ho, of course, had no idea what that news anchor was talking about. There was a brochure on the table next to the TV. It was a hotel brochure and a map for tourists.

"They are all written in Chinese letters. I had learned Chinese letters but these look different from what I had learned."

Gun-Ho studied Chinese writing and reading and obtained a level-3 certificate for it in addition to a certificate for Korean history. It was a part of the preparation process for government and private sector jobs. So he was supposed

to be able to read Chinese letters, but he could recognize only a few letters from the brochure.

"I guess this part explains about the emergency exit, but all I can read is the word 'safety'."

Gun-Ho laid down on the bed while thinking.

"The restaurant is nice and neat but I'm not sure if I can make money with it."

At that moment, the phone started to ring.

"Hello?"

Gun-Ho answered the phone in English; 'hello' was one of the few English words he knew.

"I'm Hee-Yeol Byeon. It's almost time. Let's meet in the lobby downstairs."

Mr. Byeon took Gun-Ho to the restaurant across the street. There were two huge lights about the size of a desk hanging on the main entrance. The restaurant name was Seohochancheong.

"Wow, it is a very big restaurant."

The restaurant's serving staff were standing by at the entrance side like a guard before they assist their customers. One of them brought a menu book to Gun-Ho and Mr. Byeon. While Gun-Ho couldn't read any of it, Mr. Byeon started placing orders proficiently pointing certain dishes listed on the menu book.

"How long should I stay in China to speak Chinese fluently like you?"

"I don't speak Chinese fluently at all. I've been here for seven years, but you will learn very quickly since you are young."

"You are so modest, Mr. Byeon. You have spent seven years in China. That's amazing."

"I'm not just saying it, but you would be able to speak Chinese probably within two years. Let's have Chinese alcohol, Baijinwoo, the Kaoliang wine. I will talk

to you more about my restaurant while we are eating."

49 Going to China 5

The dishes which Mr. Byeon ordered started coming out.

Gun-Ho's table was quickly filled with all sorts of dainties: fried pork, deep-fried fish, seasoned vegetables, steamed stuff, and etc.

"All these dishes cost only 30,000 won with which you can have pork belly for two people in my Korean restaurant. These dishes are commonplace here, daily food for Chinese people. On the other hand, Korean food we serve in my restaurant is special food for them."

After drinking three to four glasses of Kaoliang wine Mr. Byeon ordered, Gun-Ho felt drunk. That wine was 50 percent alcohol by volume. Once Gun-Ho became a bit drunk, Mr. Byeon dragged his chair closer to Gun-Ho and said,

"What do you think? Do you like my Korean restaurant?"

"I do actually like your restaurant. But I am not sure if I could make profits with it."

"You won't lose money. Usually, I make over 3,000 Yuan per day. Sometimes I make more than 5,000 Yuan. I will show you the daily sales report tomorrow."

"3,000 daily sales will make 90,000 Yuan per month. Then how much money does actually fall into your hands?"

"The ingredients cost 30,000, then 15,000 for labor, and 5,000 of maintenance fee, and no rent since we paid all up front."

"Then 40,000 Yuan is what you actually make?"

"That sounds right. I put aside 25,000 out of 40,000 for the payment of the restaurant for the next period. So I actually take 15,000 Yuan per month."

"If applying the current exchange rate of 120:1, it would be about 1,800,000 won."

"That is the least you could make. Our daily sales are often exceeding 5,000 Yuan. So you can assume the monthly profit would be 3,000,000 won per month."

"Hmm..."

Gun-Ho still thought the maximum profit he could take from this restaurant would be 2 million won per month. 2 million won per month wouldn't be enough for Mr. Byeon given his personal situation; he must have a family to support.

"How many family members do you have if you don't mind me asking?"

"I have two children. One of them is studying in the U.S.A."

"That must be costly."

"Whew, actually that is my main reason why I want to sell the restaurant. When I had an office job as a manager, I used to make 7 million won per month. After spending 4 million on living expenses, I could still save some money for the future. However, with 2 million income from this restaurant, I can't even imagine saving money. I am planning to try a new business after returning to Korea."

"What do you want to do in Korea? Starting a business in Korea will cost you more."

"I have a condo in Sadang Town in Seoul. It is worth 600 million won now. I bought that condo with my entire career earnings. I think I can loan some money using that condo and want to open a large Japanese restaurant in Noryangjin with my nephew."

Gun-Ho thought his 480 million won wouldn't get him a condo in Seoul since Mr. Byeon's condo in Sadang Town was worth 600 million won.

Mr. Byeon suddenly grabbed Gun-Ho's hand.

"Mr. Goo! You can succeed in this restaurant business. You are still young."

"I am not sure how I could make profits here."

"You can start by targeting travel agencies so they could bring tourists into the

restaurant. The staffs in travel agencies are about the same age as you and you can easily get close with them. Since I am an old man, it was not easy to get along with them."

"I don't know."

"China is a land of opportunity. To start a restaurant like mine from scratch, it takes enormous money and time. My restaurant is already established. You can start with this restaurant, and once you get familiar with business here in China you can try some other business."

"It doesn't have to be me, isn't it? You could sell it to a local businessman."

"The rent is 300,000 Yuan and it is almost 40 million won. There are of course rich Chinese people, but many ordinary people here are poor. It is hard to find a Chinese person who could take over my restaurant."

"Hmm..."

"Why don't you give a try? It's a lot better than the tiny restaurant in Noryangjin."

"Well, I understood what you are saying. Let me think about it."

Next morning, Gun-Ho went to Mr. Byeon's Korean restaurant and took a look at their sales ledger. His work experience in accounting came in very handy. He could grasp the financial state of the restaurant in no time. In addition, the restaurant ledger was done by the single-entry bookkeeping system, rather than the double entry accounting system.

"You listed only revenues and expenses. You did a very good job."

Mr. Byeon seemed to feel bashful by Gun-Ho's comments.

"You have to collect all the receipts for the ingredients you purchase. VAT is very high in China."

"Isn't it 10%? here?"

"It's 17% in China."

"Wow! 17%?"

"That's why you want to save all the receipts for any expenses."

That reminded Gun-Ho that he didn't file his VAT return yet for his Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant in Noryangjin. He decided that he would make the VAT return to be the first thing he would do once he returned to Korea.

"Well, anyway, thank you for showing me the sales ledger and the payroll."

"Take over this restaurant, Mr. Goo! Haha."

"Is there a OneRoom here in China?"

"You probably want to rent a small apartment instead of a OneRoom. I'm currently renting a two-bed apartment with a living room for 1,500 Yuan. It's not bad at all. In case you have a guest from Korea, the two-bed apartment is convenient. You can add your rent when you file the VAT return."

"Can a foreigner acquire a real estate in China?"

"I'm not so sure about it. I guess you might need an Alien Resident Certificate."

"You said you used to work in a Shanghai branch office of a big company. Was there anyone who purchased a real estate and lived there during their stay in Shanghai?"

"Well, there might be, but as far as I know most of us rented an apartment. Even my company rented an apartment if they needed to provide accommodation. I haven't seen anyone who actually purchased one. If you buy a real estate, it cost you a significant amount of money that you can't use until you sell it."

"I see."

That day, Gun-Ho had a Doenjang-jjigae* in Mr. Byeon's Korean restaurant.

"This doesn't taste that good. Maybe because the cooks in the kitchen are Chinese."

After his dinner, Gun-Ho walked to the famous Hangzhou West Lake. West Lake

was in a walking distance from Mando Hotel.

"So, this is the famous West Lake."

Gun-Ho squinted at sunset glow over West Lake. He could see the bank that had been built by Su Shi.

"This is so beautiful. I guess I could live a true well-being life here comparing to the life in busy Noryangjin."

Gun-Ho kept walking along West Lake. The surroundings of the lake were very well developed with commercial stores since a lot of tourists visited there. It was crowded and Gun-Ho even saw people touting for their business.

Hangzhou City where West Lake is situated was the capital of the Southern Song dynasty. Lin'an which often appears in a martial arts novel is one of the districts of Hangzhou.

"It has a great view and the area has a high traffic of people. Maybe I can sell a Korean-style chicken-and-beer combination menu."

Gun-Ho looked at the price tags of things on the street as he walked along, and they were very cheap comparing to ones in Korea. He thought the living cost in China should be low and 1 million per month would be enough.

Note*

Doenjang-jjigae – a Korean soybean paste stew

50 Acquiring a Korean Restaurant in China 1

Gun-Ho came back to his hotel room and gave a lot of thought to whether he should acquire that Korean restaurant or not.

"I think I could make about 10,000 Yuan per month with that restaurant. It is certainly not enough for Mr. Byeon who has a child studying abroad."

Gun-Ho thought for a second that Mr. Byeon might be a con-artist.

"He is probably not a con artist. He looks rather like an inept businessman due to his prolonged office job career. Moreover, his nephew is running a restaurant in Noryangjin and I know the location. He wouldn't con me, and I am not the type of person who can easily be deceived."

Gun-Ho took a cigarette.

"Should I take over that restaurant? Maybe I could get a two-bed apartment here and take a walk along West Lake every day. I can get the restaurant for 50 million won out of my 480 million won, and purchase a real estate with the remaining 400 million won. According to Chairman Lee, the price increase of real estate reflects the economic growth rate. So if China's economic growth rate is 30% for three years, the real estate price will increase by 30%, right?"

Gun-Ho calculated quickly.

"If I invest 400 million won in real estate and get 30% gain after three years, I can return to Korea with 520 million won in hand. Even assuming I blew the restaurant business here, I could still hold 520 million won. It's better than placing the money in a bank savings account."

Gun-Ho was thinking while walking around the hotel room.

"Chairman Lee also said there could be a real estate boom which would raise even more real estate price. If the real estate price goes up by 50% after three

years, I could go back to Korea with 600 million won. For the three years, I could learn the Chinese language and make that much money. I think that would be a good deal."

Gun-Ho drank two cans of Tsingtao beer that was on the table and fell asleep.

It was the day scheduled for Gun-Ho to return to Korea.

Mr. Byeon came to Hongqiao International Airport in Shanghai to see Gun-Ho off.

"So, have you thought about it?"

"I haven't decided yet."

"We say, 'Think Long, Think Wrong.' Don't think too deeply or too long. Just make a decision. To be honest with you, you can't do anything with 50 million won in Korea."

"Haha. Well..."

"Why don't we make a provisional contract? You can give me a small amount of money as earnest money."

"Provisional contract... Let's just make a contract!"

"Huh? Did you just say you want to make a contract?"

Mr. Byeon was stunned. He didn't expect this since Gun-Ho had been just thinking without giving him any clear reaction to the restaurant deal.

"Did you bring the contract?"

"Yes, I did."

Mr. Byeon pulled out the contract from his envelope that he seemed to carry everywhere and always.

"Wow. The decision came slow but once the decision is made, things have proceeded very quickly."

Gun-Ho and Mr. Byeon made a contract in the waiting area of Hongqiao International Airport.

"The name of the seller is Hee-Yeol Byeon, CEO of Mando Food Co., Ltd.?"

"Right. It was hard to directly run a restaurant as a foreign individual, so I formed a company with a Chinese person just to make it look like the restaurant is being run by a company that is partially owned by Chinese. On the paper, I own 90% and the Chinese person owns 10%, but it is just for the paper."

"Oh, I see."

"Umm... What about the earnest money?"

"You said there is a Kookmin Bank here in Hongqiao, right? I will bring the money."

Mr. Byeon seemed satisfied.

According to the contract, Gun-Ho was supposed to pay off the remaining sales price ten days later.

"The contract is written in Chinese. Once you go back to Korea, have it translated and notarized, and take it to a bank. You will need that translated contract when you send me the money. You can use up to \$10,000 without reporting anything for travel, but if you have to send more than \$10,000 abroad, you need to file a report."

"I understood."

"Oh, take this one too. You might need it."

"What is this?"

"It's a copy of the business license. You will need this to make an Alien Resident Certificate as well."

"Oh, I see."

"I could receive the money in Korea, but it is better for you to send me to China

with all these paperwork. This will prove that you acquire a business in China and you will need it when you have to send money from China to Korea as well."

"I see. Well, thank you."

Gun-Ho put the copy of the restaurant business license in his bag.

Once he came back to Korea, Gun-Ho notified the landlord that he would vacate his room. He wouldn't need room to stay in Korea anymore. He had the sales and purchase agreement of the restaurant and the seller's business license written in Chinese translated into Korean and notarized. He would need them when he had to send money to China.

"Let's go to Incheon to see my parents. It has been a while. I wouldn't be able to see them often once I move to China."

Gun-Ho took the subway line 1 and got off at Incheon Juan Station. Before he went home, he stopped by a market and bought beef leg bones from a butcher's shop.

"I want to get something more."

There was a pharmacy.

"My mom and dad like Bacchus; let's get two boxes of it."

Since he already notified the landlord to vacate the room, there might be someone entering his room to take a look while he was not present, so Gun-Ho brought all the important papers with him in his travel bag. It was heavy. By adding the beef leg bones and two boxes of Bacchus, it became even heavier.

"I can leave the bag to the parents' home when I leave for China."

Gun-Ho kept walking while passing by Juan North Elementary School and a church, and it was tiring.

"My home is so distant from the station. If I make money, I will move my parents to somewhere closer to the station. This is too exhausting."

Gun-Ho's father used to work in a production line for a company in the Juan industrial complex when he was young. After retiring, he opened a small snack restaurant. When it didn't work very well, he took a job at a subcontracting company as a manual worker. He then injured his waist at work during an underground drainage work, so he couldn't work any longer and couldn't make money anymore. That resulted in financial difficulties in the family.

"My dad collapsed once of a heart attack. He was doing better now. Thank God."

Gun-Ho walked up to the third floor of a townhouse with his heavy bag because there was no elevator. He knocked on the door once he arrived at his home.

"Who is it?"

It was his mother.

"Mom, it's me."

The front door opened wide. Gun-Ho's mother looked happy to see him.

"My son is here! What is all this?"

Gun-Ho could smell Doenjang-jjigae. It seemed they were about to have dinner.

"Gun-Ho is here?"

Gun-Ho's father came out in his pajamas. He looked better than the last time Gun-Ho saw him.

"We were about to have dinner. Let's eat together."

"It smells really good. Here it is."

"What is this?"

"Beef leg bones."

"You didn't have to bring these expensive bones. Oh, you bought us Bacchus too. You must be tired by carrying all these heavy stuff."

As his mother took what Gun-Ho brought, she smiled.

Mother's Doenjang-jjigae was really good.

"It is so nice to have homemade food. It has been a while."

"Eat more. I just cooked the rice too. It should be good."

Gun-Ho had two bowls of rice with Doenjang-jjigae. His parents looked happy while watching their son eating.

"Why don't you eat? Why do you keep staring at my face?"

"We are just happy to see our son eating."

"How are you, dad? How are you feeling?"

"I feel much better because of you, son. I would have died if you didn't send me the money for my surgery."

"Don't say that."

"Your father is receiving the old-age pension of 200,000 won every month, and he goes to Jongno 3-ga District every single day."

"Jongno 3-ga? For what?"

"There is Tapgol Park there where old people are gathering together all the time."

Gun-Ho chuckled while having his dinner.

"By the way, what is that travel bag?"

"My clothes and books. I will leave them here. I'm going to China."

"China?"

Gun-Ho's mother and father looked at Gun-Ho in surprise.

51 Acquiring a Korean Restaurant in China 2

Today, Gun-Ho was leaving for China.

"I guess I've done what I had to do before leaving Korea. Let's go to China and dream big."

Gun-Ho made a call to Jong-Suk before he turned on international data roaming on his cell phone.

"Jong-Suk? I guess I won't be able to see you for a while."

"Don't worry about it. Once you get settled in China, I will come and visit you there during my vacation."

"If you happen to see Chairman Lee at the fishing site, tell him that I am in China."

"I know we have talked with him several times, but I don't think a rich man like him wouldn't be interested in people like us. But, well, yeah I will let him know."

Gun-Ho went through the phone numbers stored in his cell phone while sitting in the waiting area of the airport.

"Sh*t! I don't have anyone else to make a call before I leave the country. Am I not a social person? I have no one to call except my parents and Jong-Suk. I do have a very small social network. When I get married, I won't have anybody to come to my wedding except my parents and Jong-Suk."

Gun-Ho felt pathetic about himself. He had spare time before the boarding time and he decided to walk around the airport.

"Lounge? It looks cozy. Should I stay here?"

A staff lady with a name tag on her chest blocked him.

"This is a VIP room."

"VIP? How to become a VIP here?"

"You have to have a first class flight ticket."

"Poor people are discriminated even here! F*ck!"

It was time to board. There was a long line in front of the gate.

"There were so many f*cking people leaving to Shanghai."

A man in uniform yelled in front of the crowd.

"People with a first or business class flight ticket, please come forward."

Several people left the long line and went to the front and made a new line.

"You can enter first."

Those people with a first or business class flight ticket entered the gate, leaving the long line behind. The people in the line stared at them with a blank face.

Gun-Ho boarded the plane. There were many vacant seats in the front area so Gun-Ho came to the front to sit there.

"This is a first class area."

A pretty flight attendant blocked him. Gun-Ho looked behind him. The area for the economic class was filled with people, while the first class area was almost empty. The first class seat seemed to have larger space for legs. Even the flight attendants serving in the first class area were prettier.

"I have to have money. I will always take a first-class seat whenever I have to travel abroad from now on! I will make sure of it!"

Gun-Ho came back to the economic class area and squeezed himself in his assigned seat. The lady next to Gun-Ho talked to a man who seemed to be her husband.

"I heard a whisky is served in the first class."

Mr. Byeon was waiting for Gun-Ho at the Shanghai airport to pick him up.

"You have a lot of luggage."

"Not really. I just bought a few books to learn the Chinese language."

Gun-Ho purchased books to prepare Chinese Character Certificate exam for level 1 and 2 in addition to a book for Chinese conversation. He wanted to study more Chinese characters during his stay in China.

"That is a good idea. You can't take the interpreter everywhere. You will sometimes have to go to a market and pharmacy without an interpreter."

Gun-Ho went to Hangzhou City and made the payment of the remaining restaurant sales price. Mr. Byeon asked Gun-Ho to pay him for a few things he would leave in the restaurant; such as a picture frame in the hall, a vacuum, and etc. Gun-Ho gave him 2,000 Yuan for them.

"Since I just arrived here and I am not very familiar with the restaurant business in China, could you stay here for a few days?"

"Sure. I was going to help you with running the restaurant for three days. Let's meet with the staffs first. I already told them that you would take over the restaurant from today. This is Dingming. She is our cashier. She also purchases fresh produce and other supplies. Remember I told you about Mando Food Co., Ltd. that 10% of it is owned by a Chinese person? Dingming owns that 10% of Mando Food. She is a younger sister of the Mando hotel manager."

"Oh, I see. Very nice meeting you."

"I look forward to working with you."

Dingming greeted Gun-Ho in Korean while stammering. She was tall and slim.

"You speak Korean very well."

Dingming started talking in Chinese and Gun-Ho had no idea what she said so he just smiled. Gun-Ho asked Mr. Byeon, "Does she do the tax return as well?"

"That's right. The tax return requires the president's signature before it can be

submitted. You can ask Mae-Hyang Kim to translate the tax return. You will catch up quickly after reading the paper maybe about twice."

Gun-Ho, then, met two serving staff ladies. They looked like in their early 20s and seemed to have just moved to the city from the countryside. Mr. Byeon then took Gun-Ho to the kitchen to introduce him to the kitchen staffs. There were four of them. One of them was off that day, so Gun-Ho met three of the kitchen ladies.

"This is the kitchen manager, Manager Kim."

"Manager Kim?"

"She is the interpreter Mae-Hyang Kim's mother."

"Oh, really? I am so glad to meet you. You should speak Korean fluently."

"Just a little. Haha."

Manager Kim said while laughing. She had some accent.

Gun-Ho met with the other two ladies in the kitchen as well. They kept saying 'G-jjong' while smiling at Gun-Ho.

"What does 'G-jjong' mean? They kept saying that word to me."

"'G-jjong' means President Goo."

"Haha. So I am 'G-jjong.' That sounds weird. 'G' sounds like a rat in Korean."

"Haha, you think so?"

Mr. Byeon laughed along.

"Well, since you are here now, why don't you go to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China around here and open a bank account? You need to find an apartment as well. You can take the same apartment as mine if you like or you can find somewhere else."

"Okay. I will stay in this hotel like last time until I find one."

"Why don't you look for an apartment tomorrow morning with Mae-Hyang Kim? For today, since you already paid off the sales price and met with staffs, you probably want to replace the name of the tenant with your name at the hotel management office."

Gun-Ho went to the hotel management office with Mr. Byeon and put his name with the restaurant. The management staff said something in Chinese.

"What is he saying?"

"He said you need to bring a copy of the business license with your name on it, issued by the tax office. Also, he is asking a copy of your passport."

Gun-Ho verified the fresh produce delivered to the restaurant the following morning. Dingming in the counter showed Gun-Ho the purchase receipts of the ingredients. Gun-Ho couldn't read Chinese on the receipts, but he could read the numbers there.

"Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim, what does this mean?"

"Hwapiào means a receipt. The receipt is for three boxes of chives and ten cartons of eggs."

"Hmm..."

Gun-Ho could guess how much fresh produce was coming in and how much food would be cooked. His experience of a restaurant business in Noryangjin was very helpful even though it was a short period of time. Dingming showed Gun-Ho how to use Chinese POS. Gun-Ho took note as he followed her around.

The kitchen ladies started cooking. The hall staffs and counter staff had spare time for now. Mr. Byeon came late to the restaurant.

"I'm sorry that I'm late today."

"You seem to have a drink last night."

"Yes. I had a drink with Korean people here since I am leaving soon after selling this restaurant."

"Are there a lot of Koreans here?"

"Not that many, but there will be, so the restaurant could prosper."

52 Alibaba President Marwin's Condo 1

Mr. Byeon sat on a chair while drinking the water he took from the water purifier.

"Have you verified fresh produce delivered this morning?"

"Yes, I just looked through it. Maybe I should go out to find an apartment now with Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim. What do you think?"

"That sounds good... But why don't you go to the tax office first? You need to get the business license with your name on it. For the tax office, you'd better go with Dingming. Since she is a local, and she has very good Kkwansi."

"Kkwansi?"

"Hmm... It's like a network."

It seemed Dingming did have good relationships with a lot of people. When they arrived at the tax office, Gun-Ho had to stop frequently for Dingming to say hello and to have a short chat with people there.

After Gun-Ho was done with the tax office, he let Dingming go back to the restaurant. He then went to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China with Mae-Hyang to open a bank account. The bank didn't require Alien Resident Certificate for a foreigner to open a bank account but having a one-year business visa stamp on his passport was enough.

After he opened the bank account, Mae-Hyang said while walking out of the bank,

"G-jjong now received the business license and has a bank account here in China. You are now a denizen in China. All you have to do from now on is to make money."

"Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim, since you have worked at the Korean restaurant in Mando hotel, what do you think of it? Are they doing well?"

"I don't know. The staffs in a position like me, we just do our job there. I guess Dingming can answer your question."

"Which area or apartment do you recommend?"

"President Byeon is living in Kangluhsinchoo, Wonalu."

"Let's try there."

They took a taxi heading to the apartment complex where Mr. Byeon was living in. It was close to Mando Hotel.

"When President Byeon made a lease contract for his apartment, I was with him. The two-bedroom apartment is 1,500 Yuan and the three-bedroom apartment is 1,800 Yuan."

"How large is the two-bedroom apartment in pyung?"

"I'm not sure about Korean pyung, but it's 82."

The apartment that Mr. Byeon was living in was a low-rise building, and the distance between the apartment buildings on the same complex was distant enough to have privacy and daylight. However, the building was shabby. Gun-Ho could see some people drying their clothes in their veranda using a pole. He also saw ducks hanging in a veranda in bare skin. Their head and feet were still attached. Some apartments hung ten raw duck meats out to dry. This scene terrified Gun-Ho.

"Let's try somewhere else. How about the apartment over there; it looks neat."

"We need to take a bus to get there. It's too far to walk."

"Let's take a taxi then."

Once they got on a taxi, Mae-Hyang and the taxi driver talked in Chinese."

"What did he say?"

"He said the apartment is in Wonssanlu, and it is expensive."

"Well, let me take a look."

The apartment complex in Wonssanlu had large apartments only and Gun-Ho didn't see a laundry pole or a hanging duck meat in their verandas. It was a gated community with a security guard; the guard was a young man looking like a soldier. The access to the apartment community was controlled by the security guard.

"A young man seemingly in his 30s works as a security guard in China."

"The young men discharged from People's Liberation Army can easily get a security guard job."

"Hmm, really? The guards in uniform seemed to work out a lot."

"Is it different from Korea?"

"In Korea, an old man over 60 years old usually works as an apartment security guard."

"How can an old man at that age catch a robber? Haha."

"There is a banner over there and something is written in red. What does it say?"

"It says a three-bedroom apartment of 120 is 2,500 Yuan per month."

"Hmm, 2,500 Yuan is 300,000 won in Korea. With 300,000 won, I could only get a tiny room in a OneRoomTel in Noryangjin. Here, I can have a three-bedroom apartment."

"Do you know who used to live in that apartment?"

"A person?"

"President Marwin. The famous Alibaba President Marwin used to live there."

"Alibaba is a multinational technology conglomerate. Why would its president, Marwin live in an apartment like that?"

"He had lived there a long time ago; he actually started Alibaba when he lived there. He didn't have money at that time, so he received investment from several different people to start his business. He is one of the richest men in China and in the world too."

"That's right. I think I read about him online. So he started his business while he was living in this apartment!?"

"Everyone in Hangzhou knows about it. Marwin's current assets exceed 250 billion Yuan."

"250 billion Yuan... is more than 30,000 billion won!"

"He is the richest man in Asia. G-jjong, why don't you start your business living in this apartment just like Marwin did? Haha."

"What does it say on the apartment entrance?"

"It says Hobanhwawon."

"Hobanhwawon where Marwin used to live... Let's take a look!"

A security guard at the apartment gate blocked them. He looked arrogant. When Mae-Hyang said something to him, he let them in.

"What did you tell him?"

"I told him that a Korean man came to see the apartment, and he opened the gate right away for us."

The apartment was a low-rise building with 6 floors which was good. However, it looked old. The distance between apartment buildings was spacious and the roads inside the community were large as well. It had a swimming pool in the community which drew Gun-Ho's attention.

"Wow. They have a swimming pool just like a movie."

"It gets really hot during summer in China. It could get up to 40 degree Celsius."

"40 degrees? Wow. Marwin is not living here right now, right?"

"Haha. Of course. Why would he live here? He lives probably in Beijing or Shanghai."

"Let's ask how much the rent is here."

"Let's go to Bangjisan and ask them."

"Bangjisan?"

"It's a realtor's office."

The 120apartment (about 36 pyung) is 2,500 Yuan per month according to the realtor they talked with, just like the banner advertisement Gun-Ho saw earlier. The realtor added that there were single houses in the community as well, and it is 5,000 Yuan.

"The community must be huge. They have single houses as well."

The realtor glanced at Gun-Ho several times when the realtor was told that Gun-Ho was a Korean, and insisted that he should take a single house for rent.

"Can you ask him how much it would be if I buy one?"

Mae-Hyang said something to the realtor.

"What did he say?"

"He said that you'll need the Alien Resident Certificate to buy a real estate. He is asking what you think about the 150apartment that Marwin used to live."

"Hmm, so Marwin indeed lived in this community. Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim! Would you ask him which apartment unit Marwin had lived?"

Mae-Hyang said something to the realtor again.

"He said Poonghawan, 16 Dang, 1 Danwon, unit 202 in Hobanhwawon."

"Please tell him that I will let him know tomorrow, and take his business card."

The realtor asked for Gun-Ho's business card as he handed over his. Gun-Ho gave him Mae-Hyang's phone number instead since he didn't have a business

card yet and he couldn't communicate in Chinese with him anyway.

Mae-Hyang asked Gun-Ho while following him with short quick steps.

"Do you like Hobanhwawon? It's a bit far from the restaurant. Will it be okay with you?"

"I've seen a lot of people riding a bicycle. Do you think I can commute by bike?"

"It's dangerous. Too many cars on the road here. Also, it rains a lot in this area."

"What about a bus?"

"There is a luxurious double-decker bus, but so many people use it. Taxi will cost you a lot. Do you see the bus over there? That's the double-decker bus. The bus fare is about two Yuan."

"How about a rental car? Do you know how much it would be?"

"A rental car?"

"You know. A car I can rent."

"You need a driver's license. An international driver's license is not accepted here. You have to get your driver's license in China, and you have to take a test for it."

53 Alibaba President Marwin's Condo 2

Mae-Hyang seemed to know a lot about the driver's license exam system in China.

"How can I take a driver's license exam here? I don't know the Chinese language."

"You can bring an interpreter with you when you take the exam. I've done it before when I worked in my previous company."

"Really?"

"But renting a car is pricey."

"How much is it?"

"The price varies depending on the types of car you rent, but you can say it would be over 3,000 Yuan."

"Hmm... If I add the rental car payment to the apartment rent, that would be too much for me to pay every month."

"Why don't you commute by bus for now and think about renting a car later once you see how the restaurant business goes. President Byeon commuted by bike and he didn't drive a car. But, the Hobanhwawon apartment is too far and expensive. Do you really want to live there?"

"I'm not sure, but I want to receive Marwin's energy from there since he used to live in that apartment."

"Haha. Suit yourself then."

It was after 9 PM—time to close the restaurant.

The kitchen ladies were changing their clothes to get ready for home, and the

two lady hall staffs started cleaning the hall. Mae-Hyang was arranging trash.

Dingming gave Gun-Ho a sales report. Today's sales were 3,100 Yun including credit card payments. Dingming said she would keep today's earnings and use it when she purchase fresh produce tomorrow, and she would give the earnings to Gun-Ho from tomorrow. She then added, "That's how I have done it with President Byeon as well."

Gun-Ho thought that made sense, so he said okay. He, then, went downstairs to his room.

Gun-Ho turned on the TV in his room. Since he didn't understand Chinese, the TV sound was a noise to him.

"It is good that I can have Korean food every day since my restaurant is a Korean restaurant. However, it's very inconvenient handling things without knowing the language."

Gun-Ho opened the Chinese conversation learning book that he brought from Korea.

"Ni Hao (Hello)."

"Cheu Pan Lo Ma? (Did you eat?)"

"Cheu Pan Lo Ma sounds like 'Shi Pal No Ma' (you, f*cker) in Korean."

He couldn't concentrate on studying. All he could think of was 3,100 Yuan that he made today.

"The earnings today was 3,100 Yuan. Assuming that I maintain the same level of sales as today, I can make 93,000 Yuan per month. The ingredients cost 30% of the sales which is almost 30,000 Yuan. The labor cost for eight staffs is 15,000 Yuan and maintenance fee is 5,000. If I subtract all these expenses, the profit will be 43,000 Yuan. I have to put aside 25,000 Yuan for the next period of rent, then the amount that falls into my hand is 18,000 Yuan. How much is this in Korean won? It's 2,160,000 won."

Gun-Ho calculated it with an electronic calculator several times.

"Wait a minute. I don't open the restaurant for a full 30 days per month; I have to close it for a few days. If say the restaurant will be open for 25 days each month, the earnings will be less than my earlier calculation. I have to consider the retirement payment for staffs and taxes as well. Then I could take only about 10,000 Yuan per month. It's 1,200,000 won."

He realized that if he had a family to support in Korea, he wouldn't be able to send money to Korea with 1,200,000 won income.

"It wouldn't even be enough for one person's living expense. Whew. If I was married, my wife would have left me already. Running my own business is hard everywhere, in Korea and in China. The restaurant looks good since it is situated in the hotel building, but actually, it is not good."

Gun-Ho kept thinking while rolling around on the bed.

"There is no chance of winning with this restaurant. I guess this is how people failed after having a business in China. If I can't save for the rent for the next period, I won't be able to keep the restaurant. I will have to pack my stuff and leave with nothing in my hand."

Gun-Ho clenched his teeth.

"Let's bet on real estate. I still have over 400 million won even after having invested in this Korean restaurant!"

Gun-Ho decided to visit the realtor's office again tomorrow and take a look at the apartment which Marwin had used to live.

"The land of this area is flat which makes it easy to ride a bike, unlike Korea. Let's just use a bike for commuting until I obtain a driver's license."

Gun-Ho calculated again.

"With a monthly income of 10,000 Yuan, I can pay 2,500 for the Hobanhwawon apartment rent. That would leave me 7,500 Yuan. I don't think I can save any money, but I can survive. I can have meals in my restaurant. What if I rent a car after I get my driver's license? Then I won't be able to cover my living expenses. Hmm. My head hurts. Let's decide later whether I want to rent a car or not."

Gun-Ho studied Chinese language a bit before he fell asleep.

Gun-Ho changed his usual morning greeting to "Ni Hao." When he came to work in the morning he always said: "Ni Hao" to each staff at the restaurant. He stuck his head into the kitchen door to say "Ni Hao" to the kitchen ladies. The ladies laughed and responded, "G-jjong, Ni Hao."

Mr. Byeon came to the restaurant with his luggage; he was going back to Korea.

"I am leaving today. It's good to see you, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, get used to the restaurant business in China. If you have any questions, just call me to Korea. I wish you prosperity in your business."

"Where do I get an Alien Resident Certificate?"

"You need to go to Public Security Office to apply for it. You will have a physical exam. They will check if you have any serious disease, especially a communicable disease."

"Then I will receive something like an ID card?"

"When I applied for it, I did receive an ID card, but these days I was told that they just put a sticker on your passport."

"What sticker?"

"It should be a sticker showing you have permission to stay in China for a certain period of time."

Gun-Ho was going to ask if he could acquire a real estate if he brought his passport with the sticker to a realtor's office, and then he decided not to.

"Thank you for everything, Mr. Byeon. I hope you every success with your business in Korea. I will visit your restaurant when I go to Korea. Please say hello to your nephew in Noryangjin."

Mr. Byeon looked around the restaurant before he headed out. He seemed to have mixed feelings. From the back, he looked lonely.

"He probably hadn't been able to support his family in Korea by sending any

money."

Gun-Ho also felt mixed feelings.

Gun-Ho went to the realtor's office again with Mae-Hyang.

"Is there any apartment in this community smaller than 120? I think it's a bit too big for me."

"There isn't. The smallest one is 120. The one which Marwin used to live was 150. Well, of course, he used the apartment for multipurpose: a residence and an office."

President Marwin had given a presentation to investors in this apartment. He gave an impassioned speech to attract investors in order to receive 500,000 Yuan (about 60,000,000 won at that time) and establish an e-commerce company. The picture of him giving the presentation can still be found on the Internet.

President Marwin was a great entrepreneur and he didn't cling to the government job exam. The government job exam was extremely competitive in China, just like in Korea due to high population.

"I will take the 120 apartment."

Mae-Hyang who was sitting next to Gun-Ho was stunned.

"What? The 120 apartment is so big that you can even play soccer. I was told that you are not married. Do you have a family and you didn't tell us?"

"No, I think I will have a guest from Korea from time to time. Haha."

"The unit 305 is 120. Would you like to take a look?"

The realtor talked, Mae-Hyang interpreted, and Gun-Ho nodded.

Once Gun-Ho agreed to see the apartment, the realtor made a call to someone.

"The old lady is at home now. We can go see the apartment."

54 Alibaba President Marwin's Condo 3

Gun-Ho and Mae-Hyang followed the realtor to the apartment to take a look at it. The apartment was really large. There were three bedrooms and two bathrooms. The interior was a bit outdated but at least it maintained unity, by placing furniture all in white: a desk and a fitted wardrobe.

"Oh! I love this apartment. It's large. Oh! There are two bathrooms!"

Mae-Hyang seemed to be more excited than Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho felt like he could smell Chinese food in the apartment and he thought he would have to ventilate the apartment by keeping windows open for maybe a day. The current occupant said they could vacate the apartment within three days.

Gun-Ho decided to take it and made a lease contract. It was 120 large, so 36 pyung in Korea.

"I know this is too big for myself, but I want to receive good energy from Marwin. I had been in church and a Buddhist temple—Doseon temple in Dobong Mountain to pray when I was studying for the level-9 government job exam. That didn't work! My mom also went to see Gatbawi Buddha sitting in Palgong Mountain which was located in Daegu City to pray for me. That didn't work either! I failed all of the government job exams I had tried: the level-9 and provincial government job exams. I want to receive Marwin's energy, who is one of the richest men in the world! It might work this time."

Gun-Ho asked the realtor as he was walking out of the apartment after finishing his tour.

"Where are the most expensive condos or houses in Hangzhou City?"

"The ones that have the view of West Lake are probably the most expensive properties."

"How much are they?"

"The newly constructed houses in the Hoobinlu area are over 3,000,000 Yuan."

3 million Yuan is 360 million won.

"Hmm... That area must be corresponding to Gangnam in Seoul!"

Gun-Ho decided to acquire a real estate in that area someday.

Gun-Ho applied for Alien Resident Certificate.

Once he submitted his business license along with his passport, they scheduled his physical exam. They also confirmed that once he completed the physical exam, he would receive an Alien Resident Certificate. Once he received his Alien Resident Certificate, he could obtain a driver's license and acquire a real estate.

Three days passed since he visited the apartment that he wanted to move in. It was Gun-Ho's moving day to the Hobanhwawon apartment.

He wanted to clean the apartment before he actually moved in. As Mae-Hyang suggested, Gun-Ho hired someone to clean the apartment. He also asked someone to change the toilet after he was told by the realtor that the toilet can be easily replaced, as long as he had money for it.

"Whoa, the apartment looks great once I changed the desk and the bed. I am the king in this space. I can practice speaking in Chinese loudly. No one will ask me to keep it down in my apartment."

It occurred to him that he wanted to bring his parents here and live together in this spacious apartment.

"A condo in this size and condition will cost several hundred million won in Korea. I had been moving around from one tiny room to another. I guess I lived long enough to see a person like me live in a huge apartment like this. Haha."

Gun-Ho thought he made the right decision in moving into this apartment, even though he had to pay 2,500 Yuan every month.

Gun-Ho went to the 1 Danwon, unit 202 where Marwin had used to live and walked around in front of that apartment.

"This apartment produced the man—one of the world's richest men. I will come here sometimes and receive the energy.

Gun-Ho closed his eyes while he was still standing in front of the unit 202 and started praying quietly.

"Dear God, our father in heaven, and dear Buddha—and dear gods in the universe, please help this young Korean man, Gun-Ho Goo to become rich just like Mr. Marwin."

Gun-Ho felt better after he prayed in his heart.

Gun-Ho purchased a fabulous bike.

The bikes in China had a number tag attached behind them. Since the land was flat and the road was wide, it was easy to ride even for a long distance. And since there were tons of people riding a bike, Gun-Ho didn't feel embarrassed.

"It's nice that I can go anywhere on this bike. There is a basket attached on the front of the bike. It can carry grocery bags. How convenient."

As he was getting used to the life in China, Gun-Ho didn't neglect his study of the Chinese language. As he learned new Chinese letters every day, he could recognize more letters from store signs on the street; he felt delighted.

"Chaos... that is a supermarket. Chanting... is a restaurant..."

He also became familiarized with roads, streets, and places in the area. Gun-Ho deposited every day, the revenue that Dingming handed over at the end of the day. Sometimes the revenue didn't even reach 3,000 Yuan and that disappointed him. However, that didn't terrify Gun-Ho since his expectation for making money was somewhere else.

"I just need this restaurant to keep going without loss."

To attract more customers to his restaurant, Gun-Ho visited several travel agencies with Mae-Hyang, which didn't result in an increase of foot traffic to the

restaurant.

"Why would Korean tourists have Korean food when they flew all the way to China to experience Chinese culture? They would rather try traditional Chinese food."

The restaurant's typical customers were Korean employees of Korean companies who had stayed in Hangzhou City for a long time, international students from Japan, and curious Chinese people. The Korean workers came to the Mando Hotel Korean restaurant because they missed Korean food due to their prolonged stay away from Korea. The Japanese international students came to the Korean restaurant because they couldn't find a Japanese restaurant in the vicinity of the area.

Gun-Ho received his physical exam for Alien Resident Certificate.

The officer in Public Security Office asked Gun-Ho while he was reviewing his application if he was living in the Hobanhwawon apartment. It seemed that they recognized the apartment community with a good reputation.

Korean international students were not often found in Gun-Ho's Korean restaurant because of the relatively high price. However, the Korean workers came to the restaurant pretty often. Gun-Ho became closer with these Koreans.

"Does this restaurant have a new owner now? You seem to be young."

"I hope to see you often in my restaurant. I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"Since you are the new owner, I'd like to tell you one thing or a suggestion. The food here doesn't quite taste like authentic Korean food. Have you thought of bringing Korean cook from Korea?"

"I will definitely consider it even though I can't do it right away because of the labor cost. Once I get enough revenue to bring a cook from Korea, I will do that."

Gun-Ho had always been polite and kind to customers. The Korean workers sometimes asked Gun-Ho to drink with them."

"Let's have a drink together, sir. We are all away from our country and feel

lonely, right?"

"Maybe next time since I am at work right now."

"One drink should be fine. Take it."

Gun-Ho hadn't had these types of experience when he ran the Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant in Noryangjin since he didn't serve alcohol at that time. With alcohol, many customers asked Gun-Ho to drink together or made a joke to him.

"Sir, where do you live?"

"I live in the Hobanhwawon apartment."

"Oh, that apartment is pricey to rent. You are living in a good place."

Gun-Ho had never ever heard that he lived in a good place before when he lived in Korea in his entire life. He felt good. 'Those pricks living in Gangnam must have felt this way all the time,' Gun-Ho thought.

It had been a month since Gun-Ho came to China.

He still can't speak Chinese but he can read most of the business signs on the street, and he became more familiarized with the road and direction since he could read. He became healthy as well since he rode a bike every day.

He made a sales statement for the month. After deducting all expenses such as ingredients, labor, maintenance fee, etc., he made 36,000 Yuan in that month. He needed to put aside 25,000 out of it for the next period rent for the restaurant. That left him with 11,000 Yuan which Gun-Ho could use. From 11,000 Yuan, he needed to pay the apartment rent of 2,500 Yuan. After subtracting the rent, Gun-Ho got 8,500 Yuan on his hand. It's about 1 million won.

"I knew this."

8,500 Yuan was not much at all to Gun-Ho, however, it was a significant amount of money for most Chinese people. The kitchen ladies took less than 2,000 Yuan per month.

"It's okay as long as there is no loss."

Gun-Ho tried to comfort himself.

During the past one month, Gun-Ho already received the Alien Resident Certificate and the driver's license. He started collecting information for his real estate investment.

55 The Branch Manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China 1

Gun-Ho usually came to work at his Korean restaurant at 9 AM.

All other staff arrived at the restaurant around 10 AM, and by 11:30 AM the restaurant was already ready to serve customers. When he ran his restaurant in Noryangjin, he had one kitchen lady working for him, so Gun-Ho had to handle various work himself. Here was different. Since the labor cost was low in China, he could hire eight workers. They all had their own role and work, so Gun-Ho didn't really have to work at all.

"There are four ladies working in the kitchen, and Dingming takes care of the counter. For the hall serving, Mae-Hyang Kim and other two ladies handle it. This is going great so far."

Gun-Ho usually sat at an unoccupied table and read a Chinese local newspaper. He particularly paid attention to articles about real estate. While he was reading a newspaper, he sometimes asked Mae-Hyang to translate the sentences he couldn't understand. There was another thing he did in the restaurant. Whenever Korean workers or Korean businessmen who had a business in China came to the restaurant in the evening, Gun-Ho was the one who served them. This job couldn't be delegated to the staff.

"Let's look around at West Lake today on a bike. It seems like they are building new luxurious apartments in Baochoolu area around West Lake. I want to see it."

The West Lake area was filled with tourists when Gun-Ho arrived on a bike. Gun-Ho had fun riding his bike there.

"Whoa, the residential community over there has a lot of luxurious single houses. They look like the houses in Seongbuk Town in Seoul. How much would they cost?"

Gun-Ho sometimes stopped his bike to eat street food. He ate Hotteock*, some other snacks and a bottle of water.

"Haha. The Chinese merchant understood my Chinese when I asked them how much it was."

After looking around at the West Lake area, Gun-Ho came back to his restaurant around 5 PM. There wasn't any customer for dinner yet. They would start coming in after one or two hours.

"Where is Mae-Hyang Kim?"

Gun-Ho looked around the hall and found Mae-Hyang having a meal with a lady at the table behind a column.

"Oh, G-jjong, you came back. This is my friend."

Mae-Hyang stopped eating when she saw Gun-Ho coming into the restaurant and introduced her friend who she was having a meal with to him.

"Hello."

Mae-Hyang's lady friend stood up to say hello to Gun-Ho.

"She is my hometown friend. She graduated from Jilin University and came to Hangzhou City to find a job."

"Oh, really? Enjoy your meal. Don't mind me, please."

Gun-Ho sat at another unoccupied table.

"Do we have an evening newspaper?"

Gun-Ho started reading the newspaper. Even though he couldn't speak Chinese, he could read a newspaper. Well, he at least could understand the big titles in the newspaper. If he saw something he couldn't understand, he would mark it and ask Mae-Hyang later. He was reading the newspaper when Mae-Hyang came to talk to him.

"Umm, G-jjong. Do you by any chance need Poodao?"

"Poodao?"

"A private tutor. For your Chinese language."

"Oh, there is a private tutor for the Chinese language?"

"Umm... my friend over there, she is staying with me right now. Once she finds a job, she will find her own place. She majored in Korean language in college. If you—G-jjong—need a private tutor, she can maybe teach you two hours a day. What do you say? She speaks Korean and Chinese very well. You can pay her 600 Yuan (72,000 won)."

"Hmm..."

"She has experience with teaching a Korean when she was in Shanghai. She is very good at it."

"Let me talk to her."

Mae-Hyang's friend came to Gun-Ho; she seemed to be shy.

"What's your name? I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"I'm Eun-Hwa Jo. I am from Jilin."

"You are a Korean Chinese. Is it possible to get Poodao in the restaurant? The place could be distracting."

"That's totally fine. You can do it anywhere. This restaurant is cozy since it is a hotel restaurant and a perfect place to study."

"What time would be good for you?"

"I guess the mornings should be good since you won't have customers in the morning."

"Let's do it then. How about from 8 AM to 10 AM? The kitchen ladies will come to work at 10 AM."

"That sounds good. I agree with you."

Gun-Ho started having his private lesson from Eun-Hwa Jo on the following day.

Eun-Hwa had a very decent accent since she was from the north. She spoke the

standard Chinese language. She also spoke Korean very well. Gun-Ho's Chinese improved notably.

"Eun-Hwa Jo is playing her role very well as a teacher. She is giving me a lot of homework."

Gun-Ho did his homework diligently. After completing the conversational Chinese book, Eun-Hwa brought the elementary textbooks used from 1st to 6th grade and started teaching Gun-Ho using them.

"Chinese children know about 3,000 Chinese characters once they graduate from elementary school. If you, G-jjong know the same, you won't have any problem reading a Chinese newspaper or magazine."

After two months, Gun-Ho started hearing and understanding simple Chinese.

It had been four months since Gun-Ho came to China.

Gun-Ho was doing well in China. It was summer already. It was really hot especially the southern area of Yangtze River. It felt like being inside an oven. However, Gun-Ho's restaurant was cool. Its air conditioner worked great since it was in the hotel building. Some of the restaurant staff stayed in the restaurant even after their work hours because the restaurant was cool and pleasant while their homes were really hot.

One day, Dingming came to Gun-Ho from the counter and said there was someone on the phone looking for him.

"Who is it?"

"He said that he is from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, and he wants to talk to G-jjong."

Gun-Ho thought he wouldn't be able to converse through the phone with a bank with his level of Chinese language fluency. So he called for Mae-Hyang.

"Why don't you take the call for me?"

Mae-Hyang picked up the phone and told the person on the other side of the phone that she was the interpreter.

"The branch manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China would like to meet with you, G-jjong."

"Me? For what? Ask him when would it be convenient for us to meet?"

Mae-Hyang got back to Gun-Ho and told him what the branch manager had told her, "He is suggesting 12 PM tomorrow at the Pinghoo Chinese restaurant & bar around the West Lake area."

"It's not difficult to meet with him. Tell him that I will be there."

The following day, Gun-Ho went to the Pinghoo restaurant & bar with his interpreter, Mae-Hyang. He took a taxi instead of his bike because he thought it was not appropriate to show to a bank's branch manager.

"I guess I will have to rent a car or something when I meet people like this."

The Pinghoo bar was huge. When they told the bar that they were the guests of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the staff in Qipao led them to the second floor. It was a private room with the West Lake view through the window. The view made Gun-Ho feel cool. The branch manager and others with him were already in the room waiting for Gun-Ho. The branch manager looked like he was in his late 40s. He was with two other female bank staff who both looked like in their 30s.

"I'm sorry that I am late. I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"Nice to meet you. I'm Jangbingchao from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China."

Gun-Ho gave him his business card that said, 'CEO of Mando Food Co., Ltd.'. He also gave it to the two other staff as well. The branch Manager handed over his business card to Gun-Ho. His business card said 'President' instead of 'Branch Manager.'

"President? The president of the bank came here from Beijing headquarters?"

Mae-Hyang took a look at the business card, and said,

"That means a branch manager. In China, we refer to a branch manager as a

president."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho smiled bitterly once he understood the meaning of the president.

Note*

Hotteock – A popular street food that is similar to a pancake that has sweet fillings.

56 The Branch Manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China 2

The branch manager poured the Longjing tea that was already prepared in a teapot and placed it on the table in his cup; he then drank some tea before he started talking, "How's your restaurant business going? The Mando Hotel Korean restaurant is one of our clients. I should have arranged the meeting like this sooner, and I am sorry about that."

"Our restaurant hasn't made substantial sales yet so we haven't put much money in my bank account as of the moment. Despite that, I do appreciate your concern and meeting with me."

The branch manager asked one of his staff sitting next to him to place an order for food. The female staff carefully selected and ordered dishes with great ingredients.

The dishes that the female staff ordered started coming out one by one. They looked expensive and fancy. Gun-Ho didn't even know the name of those dishes. The branch manager continued his small talk while smiling without getting into the real business,

"How do you like here?"

"How do you like Chinese food?"

"Where do you stay?"

"How's the view of West Lake?"

The branch manager continuously talked about trivial things.

'I believe this person came to meet with me to talk about something else...'

The branch manager poured beer in Gun-Ho's glass, and Gun-Ho drank it.

"Chinese beer is Ting Hao*."

When people in the room started feeling drunk, the branch manager got into his main business.

"As far as I know, you had deposited a significant amount of money in our bank. Are you going to let it sit like that? We do have good programs that you can use with a great interest rate so you can make your money grow effectively."

Gun-Ho, in fact, transferred his 480 million won to his bank account in China and indicated that the purpose of the transfer was to acquire Mando Food Co., Ltd. He used 50 million won out of his 480 million won when he acquired the Korean restaurant and left the remaining amount in his bank account after exchanging it into Yuan. The funds in his account were about 3,500,000 Yuan.

'I see. So he wants to use my money that was saved in their bank.'

The branch manager continued what he was saying while having his Longjing tea,

"Our bank—Industrial and Commercial Bank of China—has recently released a new bond. The interest rate is high and the maturity date varies: we have 90 days, 120 days, or more."

"I see."

The staff next to the branch manager pulled out a brochure from her bag and gave it to Gun-Ho.

"I do actually have funds in my bank account with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. However, that is not mine. I am keeping the funds in my bank account as a favor from someone."

"Oh. Are you planning to invest the funds somewhere else? If you are not going to invest your funds yet, we have a short-term program as well."

"No. The person who entrusted the funds to me wanted to invest in real estate. I can't possibly have that kind of money at my age."

When Mae-Hyang heard about the money in Gun-Ho's bank account, she became curious, but when he said that it was not his, she seemed to say in her mind, 'That's more like it.'

The branch manager smiled.

"It's an apartment, isn't it? That person who entrusted you with the funds wants to buy an apartment but instead of going through all the hassle of investing as a foreigner, he asked you to buy one for him with your name—G-jjong—because you already have an Alien Resident Certificate. Considering the economic growth rate of this country, the apartment price will go up significantly. Whoever that person is, he does have great insight in business. I believe China has less restriction than Korea in the real estate investment."

'Hmm... as expected.'

Gun-Ho was impressed. He thought that the branch manager was a stunning expert in business like Chairman Lee.

"So, I am sorry that I won't be able to invest in the bond. You have invited me for this great dinner, but there is nothing much I can do for you at this time. I will pay for the dinner."

"It was my pleasure. As you said I am the one who invited you for dinner, I will pay for the dinner of course. Let's drink. Let's get to know each other and be friends even though I am older than you. Haha."

The branch manager gulped his beer and showed Gun-Ho his empty glass. Gun-Ho also finished his beer and showed his empty glass to the branch manager.

"So, did you find a good property?"

"Not yet. I'm thinking about the apartment in Hubinlu."

"I recommend the one in Sisilu instead of Hubinlu. The apartments in Hubinlu are fancy but they are old now. You should think about the time when you sell them."

"How much is the one in Sisilu?"

"Well, the company that is selling the apartments and condos in Sisilu is one of our clients. They are selling right now and you'd better select and take a condo that's in a good location before someone else take it. The condo is about 2,500,000 Yuan. Take two of them, then you will laugh someday."

"For two condos, I have to come up with 5,000,000 Yuan. Even the person who entrusted the funds to me wouldn't have that much money."

"Don't hesitate. The area around West Lake is already saturated with condos. There would be no more land available for additional condos. Grab the opportunity while you can."

"Is there a loan system for purchasing a condo in China?"

Mae-Hyang couldn't understand one of the words that Gun-Ho said, so she asked Gun-Ho before she tried to interpret what he said,

"What is a loan?"

"I am asking if I can borrow money from the bank when I buy a condo."

"Oh, Ttaigwan! That's the loan."

Mae-Hyang resumed her interpretation.

"Of course, you can take a loan."

"And a transfer of ownership is allowed, right?"

"China is a socialist country. You don't get the ownership but you get the right to use. You will have the right to use for 99 years."

Gun-Ho was stunned.

"What happens after that?"

"The right to use is transferrable so practically you can say you own it."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho nodded his head.

"G-jjong, if you are interested, do as I recommend. Buy two condos. Our bank can lend you money if you are short in funds. The interest rate for the loan is not that high. In China, the condos must be completely built before you can purchase it so you can rent it out right away. The rent for condos in that location is 5,000

Yuan."

"Hmmm..."

"If you want to visit the site, I will contact the president of the Hwaganghwawon so they can facilitate your visit. If you tell them my name, they will assign a good location unit for you."

"Thank you for the information."

"We still have beers left. Let's drink up."

"Cheers!"

"Cheers!"

All five people in the room stood up and shouted "Cheers!" as they clinked glasses.

Gun-Ho went to the Hwaganghwawon condo community located in Sisilu, accompanied by Mae-Hyang. In China, they didn't name the condos with weird words like Korea. They didn't name the condo community as Raemian, E-ComfortableWorld, or HillState. Instead, they name it as Hobanhwawon, Hwaganghwawon, Pyunghaesinchon, etc.

"Whoa, the main entrance to the community is majestic. Why haven't I seen this before?"

A young security guard was monitoring people who were trying to enter the community. He looked like a military gate guard in Korea.

"Where are you going?"

The security guard asked in an intimidating manner.

"We are here to see a condo."

Mae-Hyang answered bluntly. She seemed to be offended by the guard.

The security guard scanned Gun-Ho. He didn't seem to believe what Mae-Hyang said because Gun-Ho looked too young to buy an expensive condo.

"The manager from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China recommended us that we should take a look at some of the condos here. This man is from Korea."

Gun-Ho smiled as he showed his Korean passport to the guard. The security guard gestured for Mae-Hyang to proceed without looking at the passport that Gun-Ho showed.

"I am treated well because I am a foreigner."

Gun-Ho met with the president of the Hwaganghwawon condo community. He looked like the leader of a gang.

"Oh, I received a call from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. I was told that someone from Korea will stop by."

There was a plastic architectural model of the community in the president's office. The president recommended the unit located close to the main gate. There was a stone lion sculpture in front of it. Gun-Ho liked it too. Gun-Ho made a contract to buy two condos that were priced for 2,600,000 Yuan each. So the total price was 5,200,000 Yuan (624 million won). He would take a loan for the amount short from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. The condo was 198 each.

"Hmm... The sales and purchase agreement is called Hapdongseo in China."

A Chinese staff of Hwaganghwawon who brought necessary papers for the contract seemed surprised. The staff said to Gun-Ho who just bought two very expensive condos seemingly without any difficulty, "Korean people are rich maybe because Korea is a highly developed country."

Note*

Ting Hao – Very good in Chinese

57 The Branch Manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China 3

In China, a new condo was sold without finishing the interior so the owner could finish it with their choice of wallpaper, flooring, countertop, etc.

Gun-Ho chose luxurious materials for the interiors of his two condos.

Gun-Ho went to the Hwaganghwawon frequently to see the interior construction of his condos. He felt embarrassed to ride a bike to the community, and taking a taxi every time he visited there was not realistic. So he rented a car, an Audi. He chose the Audi because it was the brand that was most frequently seen in that area.

"Even though this is a used car, this Audi is good. There were only 60,000 kilometers on it. I rented this car under the business name, Mando Food that runs the Korean restaurant so I can get a tax benefit which is good."

Gun-Ho went to Hwaganghwawon in his Audi. The security guard didn't block him. As Thanksgiving Day would soon be here, Gun-Ho gave 100 Yuan (12,000 won) to the security guard to thank him for his hard work. The security guard seemed to be astonished.

"Are you the Korean who had a business here?"

"That's me. Haha."

The impact of that 100 Yuan was significant. From the moment he gave 100 Yuan to the security guard, the guard always gave Gun-Ho a military salute whenever he saw Gun-Ho.

"You look marvelous. Did you serve the People's Liberation Army?"

"That's right. I was recently discharged from it."

Gun-Ho was living in a condo community with a swimming pool, and his

apartment had three bedrooms. He was riding an Audi and running a Korean restaurant in a hotel building. In the Korean community in that area that Gun-Ho was living in, Gun-Ho was known to be a rich young man.

"You pricks, it's not possible to have this kind of extravagant life by running a Korean restaurant. I can only do this because I will have two condos that will be generating additional income."

The interior was finally completed for Gun-Ho's two Hwaganghwawon condos. As soon as he put these condos on the market for rent, they were gone, maybe because they were brand new. The rent was priced for 5,000 Yuan each.

So, Gun-Ho was getting an additional income of 10,000 Yuan from these rental properties. At that time, the usual starting salary for a college graduate in China was less than 3,000 Yuan, so 10,000 Yuan was a substantial income in China.

"One was rented to a hospital director of an international hospital. He is from Hong Kong. The other one was taken by a German who is the president of a pharmaceutical company. I don't think I have to worry about getting rent from them."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to the branch manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China.

"The condos were completed and they are already rented out. I'm calling to thank you for everything."

"Don't mention it. If you need an additional loan please feel free to come to me. We are friends, right? Haha."

Gun-Ho did his math.

Even though he was making 10,000 Yuan from two condos, he had to pay for the Audi rent and loan interest. After subtracting these expenses, nothing much was left in his hand. However, he felt good.

"Let's wait until the price of condos increase. Let's wait for three years. Money makes money. I had been in Hwaseong, Pocheon, and Yangju to work in a factory, and I had realized that whenever a condo's price went up by 10 million won in those provincial areas, a condo's price in Seoul would go up by 100

million won!"

Once he bought the condos, he turned his attention to his study of the Chinese language. He studied strenuously.

"I couldn't concentrate on my studies when I was in Korea because there were too many things going on in my head at that time. However, I can focus on studying just fine here."

Once he took a lesson from his private tutor—Eun-Hwa Jo—in the morning, he always reviewed what he learned that day at home in the evening. Since the 120 (36 pyung) large space of his apartment was all his, he practiced speaking Chinese out loud freely at home. Several months passed by.

The kitchen ladies were talking about Gun-Ho's Chinese language fluency.

"G-jjong, you speak Chinese very well now. I think you can now understand everything we're saying."

"Now, I have to be careful with what I say when G-jjong is around. He reads a Chinese newspaper too."

Gun-Ho now talked with Dingming at the counter without a problem and without an interpreter. One day, Eun-Hwa—Gun-Ho's private tutor—suggested for him to take the Chinese Proficiency Test called HSK.

"Am I qualified to take HSK? I didn't even study Chinese in college."

"There was a Korean lady I taught for four months when I was in Shanghai. After four months of studying, she obtained the HSK-level 5. On the other hand, there was a man who studied Chinese for three years, and he couldn't even pass the HSK-level 2 test. So this is all up to you. I believe with your proficiency, you can pass the HSK level-5 test."

"If I understand correctly, the highest level of HSK is level 6. And you are asking me to take the level 5 test. I've heard that level-5 is hard to pass even for people who majored in the Chinese language in college."

"G-jjong, you have lived in China. You can do better than them."

"Do I have to go back to Korea to take the HSK test?" Gun-Ho talked to himself, and when Eun-Hwa heard of what he said, she responded, "You can take it in China. I believe the HSK test is held in Shanghai. I will find it out for you."

Gun-Ho purchased a preparatory book for the HSK test and started studying it.

"I think I can handle the reading section since I had studied Chinese characters when I was in Korea and I even obtained the level-3 certificate for it. I also continued studying for the level-1 and level-2 certificate even after I came to China. The problem is the listening comprehension section. Maybe I should just take the test so I could gain valuable experience?"

Gun-Ho thought that he was just wasting money and time if he traveled to Shanghai to take the test.

"How long have I been learning the Chinese language from Eun-Hwa? Whoa, it has been six months already. I guess I know better than other Koreans who only studied it in Korea. I've been directly exposed to the language on a daily basis. I had to talk with merchants and other Chinese people on the street and in a market. Okay, let's try it. I want to know my proficiency level in the Chinese language. Let's take the HSK exam."

Gun-Ho registered for the test.

Once he registered for the test, he felt more urge to study.

"I have only one week left before the test. Let's put all of my energy into studying."

Gun-Ho was not dumb.

He went to a high school in the metropolitan area, and his family couldn't afford to support his study with a private tutor. So he was admitted to a college in a province. After dropping out of college, he went to a cyber college and graduated from there. The reason why he went to a cyber college was that he wanted to transfer to another college and take a 4-year course later, maybe a college in Seoul or Incheon where his parents lived in. However, he had to make a living at that time. That was why he clung to the level-9 government job exam.

Gun-Ho studied for the HSK test in his spacious apartment, and he lifted his head and looked outside the window.

"I like the fact that I can focus on this HSK exam. When I was studying in Noryangjin for the government job exam, I had to work the whole day, and study in the evening. I was too exhausted to concentrate on my studies in the evening after work."

Gun-Ho took out a cigarette and started smoking.

"Well, I guess I have done all kinds of part-time jobs when I was in Noryangjin studying for the exam. I worked at a convenience store, did a chicken delivery, and carried ice in a seafood market. I even worked in a duct construction field. How could I study at that time? I just wasted my life there."

Gun-Ho thought about his current life.

"I have two fancy condos. I am running a Korean restaurant in a hotel. I am riding an Audi to commute. I am living in a large and luxurious apartment that measured 36 pyung. I am studying the Chinese language, nothing else. In addition, I have a private tutor. With the help of all of this support, why wouldn't I concentrate on studying?"

Gun-Ho turned on the TV and watched a Chinese soap opera. He couldn't fully understand it, but he could understand some simple conversation. It was fun.

"After two or three years, I think I can understand over 90% of the Chinese language"

Gun-Ho fell asleep while watching the soap opera. A happy smile appeared on his face.

58 Transfer to a college in China 1

Gun-Ho took the HSK test and passed level-4.

He was disappointed about the fact that he couldn't reach the level-5's passing score since he studied so hard. However, he knew that he could try again next time so it was okay. When he had failed the level-9 government job exam in Korea, he felt devastated. He didn't feel that way anymore.

"I used to feel like a loser whenever I had failed the government job exam because at the time having a government job was the only way to handle my situation; I didn't know any other way out. I was so scared of being left out, and not knowing what to do to overcome my financial difficulties. Damn Korea's level-9 government job exam!"

Eun-Hwa was not sure whether she should congratulate him or comfort him when she heard that Gun-Ho passed the HSK level-4, instead of level-5.

"G-jjong, you did a good job in passing the level-4. It was your first time trying the exam."

"I actually thought I might pass the level-5, but I missed a lot of questions in the listening comprehension section"

"I heard people who passed the level-5 are the ones who majored in the Chinese language in a 4-year college. You made it to level-4 in just a short period of time, and level-4 is not a low level at all. The admission requirement for most universities in China for international students is HSK level-4."

"Oh, really?"

An idea flashed across Gun-Ho's mind when he heard the college admission requirement for international students was HSK level-4.

"Right. That's it!"

"What's on your mind?"

"Let's transfer to a college in China. There is Zhejiang University close to the condo I acquired. I heard Zhejiang University is one of the best universities in China!"

Gun-Ho decided to explore quietly more about transferring to Zhejiang University.

Gun-Ho felt sorry to Eun-Hwa who tried hard in preparing Gun-Ho for the HSK exam.

In appreciating her effort, Gun-Ho took an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket and put 300 Yuan without showing it to anyone and then handed it to Eun-Hwa.

"Ms. Eun-Hwa Jo, I appreciate your efforts in preparing me for the HSK exam, and I want you to take this. I was only able to pass level-4 because I had a good teacher like you."

"Wow. Is this for me?"

Eun-Hwa took the envelope from Gun-Ho; she seemed to have felt shy but delighted.

Korean international students sometimes came to Gun-Ho's Korean restaurant. They couldn't come very often because the food's price there was not cheap. However, they came when they were tired of having Chinese food every single day and missed Korean food. A few Korean students came to the restaurant on a Saturday.

"How're your studies? It's not easy to study while being away from your home, right?"

"Yeah..."

"Try this. It's a Korean pancake."

"Is it complimentary?"

"Don't worry. It's free."

The Korean students ordered a few bottles of beer. When they almost ran out of beer, Gun-Ho brought one more bottle of beer to their table."

"What is this? We didn't order it."

"This is on me. You are like my younger brothers. Enjoy the beer, on the house."

"Wow, thank you, sir!"

"Oh, umm, can I ask you something? Do you know anything about transferring to Zhejiang University?"

"A new semester starts in September, so I guess they are accepting applications right now. I heard that a transfer admission is less competitive than admission directly from high school."

"Do they accept HSK level-4?"

"I believe so. A student with HSK level-4 might face difficulties understanding the lectures in the university, but I believe they can be admitted."

"What about a cyber college. Do they accept a cyber college diploma for transfer students?"

"I don't know. I guess as long as it is a bachelor's degree, they will accept it. Why don't you ask the admission office?"

"Hmm..."

"Why are you asking all this? Is your younger brother thinking of transferring to Zhejiang University?"

"Huh? Oh, no... someone asked me to find out about the transfer process to that university."

Gun-Ho wanted to say, 'Not my younger brother, but I want to transfer to that university, kids!'

Gun-Ho visited the admission office of Zhejiang University and asked about the transfer process with his not so fluent Chinese.

"You need to submit a copy of your passport, HSK test result, college diploma, college transcript, and a financial document showing how you receive your tuition and living expenses, etc."

"Do you accept a college diploma from a cyber college?"

"A cyber college? Like Dienseutta? (a college with TV lectures) As long as you can provide a college diploma, that's fine."

"What kind of majors are there in the business department?"

The staff in the admission office showed Gun-Ho their brochure about programs the university provided.

"Hmm... I guess I should choose the accounting major. I've obtained the computerized accounting level-2 certificate in addition to my work experience in the field. I think I can understand better the accounting lectures with my background. Moreover, since accounting majors use more numbers and fewer writings compared to other majors, that could work as an advantage for me."

Gun-Ho knew he should make a quick trip to Korea soon to prepare all these required documents.

Gun-Ho went to Korea for the documents required to transfer to Zhejiang University.

Gun-Ho's mother was happy and surprised when Gun-Ho arrived home unexpectedly.

"I knew you told me you would come soon, but I didn't expect you so soon."

"I need to prepare some documents for college as soon as possible."

"A college? What college?"

"I am going to transfer to a college in China this coming semester."

"Transferring to a college? I thought you went to China to work."

"I work there. I am running a Korean restaurant. I can do both studying and

working."

"Are you taking night classes? What about the tuition?"

"Mom, stop asking all these questions. I'm handling the situation. I am starving mom. Can I have your Doenjang-jjigae? I love your Doenjang-jjigae. Oh, and this is for you. I bought it at the duty-free shop at the airport. I want you to look younger using this cream."

"Wow! This is made in another country. It should be expensive!"

"I bought one more for sister. Please give it to her when she visits you. And this is for dad. It's a fancy Chinese liquor, called Maotai."

"Oh my gosh! These are all way too expensive."

"This is a chocolate for Jeong-Ah."

Jeong-Ah was Gun-Ho's niece, his sister's daughter. She was going to kindergarten.

"Wow. This chocolate is huge. You didn't forget about your niece when preparing all these."

Gun-Ho's mother seemed to be happy, and the sound of cooking from the kitchen became vigorous.

Gun-Ho transferred to Zhejiang University at the age of 33 as a third year in the accounting major. He seemed to be the oldest student in the university, and he didn't have a chance to spend time with other Korean students. He didn't have time for it either because he had a restaurant he had to run.

"Big brother, we are going to have a gathering for Korean students. Will you join and support us?"

Sometimes the Korean students came to Gun-Ho to ask for something. Some students had a lot of nerve to call him big brother instead of sir.

"I'm afraid that I won't be able to attend. I am a student here but I also have to work. Instead, I will get you three boxes of beer for the gathering!"

"Whoa, you are the best, big bro!"

Gun-Ho ran the restaurant and also went to college.

"It has been one and a half year already since I came to China. I've purchased two condos a year ago, and I have been studying in college for eight months now. I am not sure if I am doing good. I hope I am not missing anything."

Gun-Ho received a call from the branch manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China.

"It has been a while since we last met, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. The spring had passed and it's almost summer. Do you know how to play bowling?"

"Bowling? I am not good at it but I do love watching others playing it. Haha."

The last time Gun-Ho visited Korea, he purchased Korean cosmetics for the branch manager. He loved it.

'I don't know how to play bowling, but I had to tell him that I love to watch others playing it, so he could invite me for bowling. Who knows? Maybe he has some valuable information for me.'

Gun-Ho thought.

When Gun-Ho said he loved to watch others playing bowling, the branch manager continued talking about bowling,

"We are not very good at playing bowling either. Let's meet at the bowling alley in Wonalu. How about 3 PM tomorrow?"

Gun-Ho didn't have class tomorrow. The restaurant was being handled by Dingming and Mae-Hyang. Since Eun-Hwa, Gun-Ho's private tutor hadn't found any job yet she would probably have time tomorrow. Gun-Ho thought that he should better ask Eun-Hwa to go bowling with him.

"Sounds good!"

59 Transfer to a college in China 2

The bowling alley was large and nice unexpectedly.

The temperature outside was high. The elders in the area used hand fans to create a breeze in bare torso. People selling stuff, students, and constructions workers—they were sweating in this hot summer. On the other hand, the bowling alley was a totally different world. The air conditioner was working great.

"Hey, G-jjong, here! We are here!"

The branch manager and the female bank staff were already in the bowling alley waiting for Gun-Ho while playing bowling. They got so excited when one of them bowled a strike by shooting a ten pin.

"You are very good."

Gun-Ho approached the branch manager's party while praising them. Actually, Gun-Ho had never played bowling before. There were bowling alleys in Korea but they were not very popular. This was Gun-Ho's first time experience in a bowling alley.

Gun-Ho carefully observed how the bank people moved by playing bowling. They walked three steps before releasing the ball. That didn't look so difficult.

"G-jjong, why don't you try it?"

Gun-Ho rented bowling shoes at the counter and played bowling. Once he released his bowl ball, it didn't roll in the center as it was supposed to be, but it went to the side. The bank staff laughed. The branch manager said while laughing along with them,

"Korean people play golfing a lot rather than bowling, right? Maybe I should learn how to play golf from you, G-jjong."

"Oh, umm..."

Gun-Ho had never played golf before either. He used to consider people who played golf as people in another world. Gun-Ho felt perplexed when the branch manager asked Gun-Ho to teach him how to play golf, so he quickly changed the subject.

"Since I am not very useful in bowling here, I will go and buy something to drink."

Gun-Ho bought a few soda and ice creams. While having his ice cream, the branch manager congratulated Gun-Ho.

"Congratulate me for what?"

"I talked with the Hwaganghwawon construction president today on the phone. He said it had been one year from the date that all Hwaganghwawon condos were sold, and the price of the condos already increased a lot."

"Oh, really? The price increased as much as the economic growth rate in China?"

"That rate is the average rate of entire China. The area where Hwaganghwawon is located is a nice area and the price increased even more. I was told that the price increased by 20% already."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho started calculating.

"I exchanged 400 million won with Chinese Yuan and invested them into these condos. With the increase of 20%, I should gain 80 million won. I knew money makes money."

The bank staff started talking.

"What are the branch manager and the Korean businessman talking about?"

"They said the price of Hwaganghwawon condos increased significantly."

"Hmm, the price of the already expensive condo increased again. People like us will never be able to live in a condo like that even with our entire career

earnings."

"The price increase thing in that sort of fancy condos is in a different league from us. Let's just keep playing bowling!"

The female bank staff seemed to be jealous as they talked about the Hwaganghwawon condo and started smoking. The bowling alley was large and it also had a high ceiling, so smoking was allowed.

"You'd better grab the ball like this before you release it."

The branch manager taught Gun-Ho how to play it and came closer to him and said,

"G-jjong, are you interested in moving your funds to another real estate?"

Gun-Ho thought it was the branch manager's agenda for today—upon meeting with him.

"Huh? What kind of real estate?"

"There is a Chodaeso (similar to a motel in Korea) building in Nansanlu; it is partially completed. If you sell your Hwaganghwawon condos, you can acquire it with the proceeds."

"Did you say the building is partially constructed? If so, I will have to spend more money to complete it after acquiring it."

"We can lend you the necessary funds."

"Hmm..."

"Once the building is completed, you can attract a lot of Korean tourists."

"I don't know..."

"Would you like to try it?"

"It's so sudden, and I think I need time to think about it. I will talk to the person who entrusted the funds to me."

"Alright. Talk to him. You won't regret it. The building is located right next to the hospital in Nansanlu. It's on the road to your home so you will see it on the way home."

Gun-Ho started thinking about it by himself.

"Acquiring the building... hmm... The condos generate income, however, if I acquire this building I won't get anything until it is fully built. I have to pay the Audi rent every month."

Gun-Ho felt very good when he was told that the price of his condos went up by 20% and then the branch manager threw this bomb to his face with the suggestion of the building acquisition.

"I want to hear the opinion of others. Who should I talk to? That's right. I will talk to Dingming's sister. She is the Mando hotel manager."

Dingming's sister disagreed with the idea of acquiring that incomplete building.

"The owner of that specific building has been changed several times already. Even though you could acquire it for 5,000,000 Yuan, you would need additional 3,000,000 Yuan until the completion of the building. If you have that money, that might be okay. But if you have to loan 3,000,000 Yuan, that's too risky. You will have to pay the interest until the completion, right?"

"You're right."

"Moreover, you can't rely solely on Korean tourists. The number of Korean tourists had been constantly increased three or four years ago, but not anymore. In addition, the tourists don't often stay in Chodaeso; they prefer a hotel since it is their trip abroad. Also, you should consider that since the building is partially finished, the ownership and the chain of titles must be very complicated."

Gun-Ho agreed with Dingming's sister.

"I did the right thing by asking you about this. I think your professional opinion is accurate with your knowledge and insight gained from the work experience in the hotel business."

Gun-Ho told the branch manager that he would pass his suggestion this time.

"The investor in Seoul who entrusted the funds to me wanted to stay with two condos for now. I'm sorry."

"You don't have to feel sorry about it. If the investor decided, then nothing much we can do about it. Haha. Since the condo price went up by 20%, and if you need additional loan later for another business, just let me know."

The lending suggestion from the bank branch manager reminded Gun-Ho of the story that Chairman Lee had told him before.

"Chairman Lee acquired a building for 25 billion won during the Korean IMF crisis and when the price of the same building was hiked to 200 billion won, he lent 100 billion won from a bank. Then, he purchased a paper production company and a small building with the loan. This is the magic of money. China is not in the IMF crisis, so the price building was not a steal as Chairman Lee had experience in his old time. Let's be happy with the 20% price increase with my condos."

Gun-Ho decided to focus on his study for now.

"I don't have to physically work in my Korean restaurant since I am the owner. However, going to college is really tiring. There are too much to read and it is really hard to study."

Gun-Ho barely passed the exams in the university and continued his study. He was in his fourth year in the university when a young professor came to his university to teach from Yale University in the U.S.

"That professor seemed to be about the same age as myself. That professor is the youngest one among the professors here, and I am the oldest one among the students here. Sh*t."

The young professor taught finance. When he first came to the university, a staff introduced him to the students like this,

"This new professor's name is Jien Wang. He is from here, Hangzhou City."

"Jien Wang. If I say his name in Korean, it is Gun Wang; the same name as our first king in Goryeo Dynasty of Korea."

"Professor Wang had ranked first in the SAT in the entire Hangzhou City. After he graduated from Beijing University, he went to the U.S. to pursue his Ph.D. at Yale University. He taught at Yale before he came to our university."

"Wow. He has an excellent academic background."

Gun-Ho couldn't help comparing himself to this professor who was about the same age as him. This professor was a professor of one of the IVY league universities at this age. Until this time, Gun-Ho had never thought that this professor would be the best friend of himself.

60 Transfer to a college in China 3

It was summer.

The southern area of Yangtze River was humid and hot. Most people in that area exposed their skin in an effort to fight the heat. Summer vacation started in the university that Gun-Ho was attending and Gun-Ho didn't have to go to school for a while.

"Whew, I don't have to go to school for now and I can relax a bit."

The past several months had been hectic for Gun-Ho. He had to run a Korean restaurant, go to college, and study the Chinese language. It was busy and hard, but also rewarding.

"I have one more semester left before my graduation. I will then have a college diploma from Zhejiang University! I had passed the HSK level-4 before I started college. Let's try the level-6. Eun-Hwa found a job and she can't come to teach me as often as before. I should take the level-6 test before she becomes even busier."

Eun-Hwa had been living with Mae-Hyang for the past year and recently moved out once she found a job in the Jiaxing area. She started working in a joint Chinese-Korean venture that manufactured fabrics. Consequently, Eun-Hwa now came to Gun-Ho's restaurant twice a week to give him private tutoring in the Chinese language.

Gun-Ho had spare time during his summer vacation in college. He made a call to Jong-Suk.

"Jong-Suk?"

"Hey, bro! I was actually going to call you."

"Why? Anything interesting?"

"You are expecting too much from a person like me!"

"Why are you saying that? You are the MacGyver Park who can fix anything."

"Save it! I'm going to take a summer vacation soon."

"Oh, you are? Then come visit me here."

"Yeah, I talked with Suk-Ho bro from Gyeongridan Street about it. He wants to visit you in China too."

"Really? Sure! Come. Did you get the visa?"

"I applied for it already. It's a visitor visa valid for a month. I think I will receive it tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. I will let you know once I reserve a flight ticket."

"Sounds good."

"We will be arriving at the Shanghai airport; you can come to the airport to pick us up, right?"

"Of course. I will bring a car."

"You must come, okay? None of us can speak Chinese. We will get lost without you. I can't be a missing person in China."

"Don't worry about it, bro. I will be there even before you arrive."

"How much should I expect for a hotel room?"

"Don't worry about the hotel. You can stay in my place."

"Bro, in your tiny room? Can three of us stay in your tiny room altogether?"

"It's not a tiny one room, man. It's an apartment."

"Really?"

"Just get a flight ticket and come, okay? You don't have to worry about a place to stay and the food you eat. I will handle them for you."

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho arrived in China.

"Hey bro, you seemed to gain some weight."

"You too, man. Don't you have to work so hard these days? Hey, Suk-Ho. Good to see you, man."

"All those store signs look so complex. The Korean language is the best. Sejong, the Great King did a really great job in creating our writing system."

"Huh? Is this your car, bro? It's Audi. You are a successful man now. Where is your chauffeur?"

"I'm driving."

"You drive? You can do that with your Korean driver's license?"

"I obtained my driver's license here. You want to see it?"

Gun-Ho showed Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho his Chinese driver's license.

"Wow, you do have a Chinese driver's license."

Gun-Ho drove them around Shanghai City.

"This is the main street in Shanghai, Nanjing Road. That is the Waitan, a waterfront area."

"Whoa, Shanghai is so beautiful. It's indeed an international city."

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho were busy looking around the city.

They visited Dongfang Mingzhou and Yuyuan Garden in Pudong. They saw the Huangpu River and took a picture in Waitan.

"Aren't you hungry yet? Let's eat. We are going to have Chinese traditional food since you are in China."

Gun-Ho took them to the back side of Nanjing Road. There was a huge Chinese restaurant. It looked fancy and luxurious.

"Whoa, this is huge. It should be larger than 300 pyung. And this huge space is filled with people."

The restaurant staff in qipao brought a menu book to Gun-Ho's party.

Gun-Ho placed an order in Chinese. His Chinese was not fluent, but when Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho heard him talking in Chinese, he sounded like a native Chinese.

"Wow, bro. You sound like a native Chinese."

Suk-Ho seemed to be surprised as well.

"You, when did you learn Chinese? You sound fluent."

"Nah, I don't speak Chinese fluently at all. I am attending Zhejiang University right now. I transferred there. I will be graduating after next semester."

"Really?"

They both were stunned.

"How did you manage to run a Korean restaurant and go to college at the same time?"

"Yeah, I did manage somehow. The restaurant doesn't require my constant presence since I could hire many staff working in my restaurant. I just have to count money at the end of the day."

"How many workers do you have in your restaurant?"

"I have eight people."

"Eight? The restaurant must be sizable."

"No, not really. Labor costs here are lower than Korea so I could hire more people."

After sunset, they arrived at Hangzhou City.

"This is a big city too."

"The population for the entire city is 7,500,000 and 1,700,000 people out of it are living in the main city area."

"Really? I guess the city is bigger than Daegu City in Korea."

They arrived at Mando hotel, and Gun-Ho showed them his Korean restaurant in the building.

"Wow, it's neat and nice. So you are the president of this restaurant, huh? A factory worker made his success."

Suk-Ho laughed as he heard what Jong-Suk said.

Suk-Ho then looked around.

"Considering the size of this restaurant, the rent must be high. How much do you make per day?"

"It varies. If I receive a lot of tourists, I could make a lot; otherwise, I make 3,000 to 4,000 Yuan in an ordinary day."

"How much is it in Korean won?"

"It's about 500,000 won."

"You said the labor costs are low here. How much do you pay?"

"You can hire eight people with the same amount of money you have to pay for two lady workers in Korea."

"I see, hmm..."

Suk-Ho seemed to be envious.

"How's your bar in Gyeongridan Street? Is it going well?"

"Yeah, it's doing okay. I can make a living with it."

"Same here. It's hard to run your own business both in Korea and in China. We are just making money for our own labor."

Gun-Ho came back to his Hobanhwawon apartment with Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho.

Once Gun-Ho turned on the light, they could see the living room.

"Wow! It's spacious. It has to be at least 40 pyung large!"

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho were impressed.

"It's actually 36 pyung."

"Why do you need an apartment this big for yourself? Bro, are you living with someone? Like a Chinese lady?"

"Haha, no bro. You, pervert!"

"Wow, you indeed succeeded in your life. I still remember you when you worked in Pocheon and Yangju with your runny nose. I remember it like it was yesterday."

"You say that again!"

"No, I'm serious. You are a successful man, bro. You are running a large and clean restaurant, living in this huge apartment looking like a castle, and you are riding an Audi. Who wouldn't say you are successful?"

Gun-Ho just laughed, but what he truly wanted to say was,

"These are all bubbles. None of them are mine. I rented the apartment and the Audi. I don't make enough money for a living with that restaurant. My hope is sitting at the Chinese real estate market. Do you understand that, kid!?"

Gun-Ho unpacked his grocery bags on the table.

There were beer, dried snacks, fruits, and dried beef, etc. The three men drank all night while talking, and they didn't realize how many hours passed by while they enjoyed each other's company.

61 The Result of The Real Estate Investment 1

Gun-Ho, Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho got up late at 9 AM next morning, after the long night of having a drink and a lot of talking.

"I got a headache."

"Here it is. Drink the water."

After drinking the water, Jong-Suk felt better.

"Go wash yourself. There are two bathrooms. Pick any of them and take a shower."

"Hmm, it's nice to stay in a big apartment."

"Let's have breakfast in my restaurant. But you have to know that there is no such thing as a hangover soup in China. There is no ox blood soup, Yangpyeong hangover soup, or pork rib hangover soup here."

"Then what are we going to eat?"

"We have a beansprout soup in my restaurant. We can have it with rice. It's not as tasty as the one in Korea, but it's okay to eat."

The three guys brushed their teeth and took a shower before they walked out of the apartment.

"Huh? There is a swimming pool in this apartment community."

"Right. It gets so hot during the day here. So some apartment communities provide a swimming pool to their residents."

"Wow. That's nice."

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho took a picture of the swimming pool.

"Let's have breakfast first, and we will stop by several tourist spots including West Lake."

"What about your restaurant? Don't you have to work?"

"That's okay. The staff knows what they are doing."

"We don't want to interrupt your business or life here, man."

"That's fine. No worries!"

After having breakfast in Gun-Ho's restaurant, the three men went to West Lake, Lingyin Temple and a green tea plantation.

The following day, they visited a silk market and a night market, and they also watched a Chinese traditional performance, etc. They spent three days and four nights, having fun by visiting tourist spots and exploring Chinese cultures. And then it was time to go back to Korea for Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho.

"I'm sorry, Gun-Ho. I guess we took too much time of you."

"Don't say that."

"No, bro. You spent too much time and money for us. I am sorry too."

"Hey, don't think that way. You used to feed me with a lot of drinks before."

"We brought some Pollock roe and dried seaweed for you."

"Thank you, guys. These are so precious to me. Since you brought me something precious, I will give you guys something in return."

Gun-Ho handed a bag to each of them.

"What is this?"

"This is a traditional Chinese tea, and this one is traditional liquor, one for each."

"Traditional Chinese liquor? Whoa, thank you, bro."

"Thank you, Gun-Ho."

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho seemed to be truly grateful for Gun-Ho's gifts.

After they left, Gun-Ho was back to his routine. He had some spare time before his school started.

"I still have a few more days left before going back to college. Let's take a bike and go around the town. It will be good exercise."

Since Gun-Ho now could speak Chinese, he often talked with people on the street.

"How's your day? Did you sell a lot today? How much rent do you pay for your store? I am running a restaurant over there."

"Not very good today."

"Where do you buy the tofu? It's delicious."

Gun-Ho enjoyed street food as well, but he had to choose it wisely. Some of them were really good, while some were really bad for Gun-Ho; the bad ones smelled bad and sometimes he wanted to just throw them out.

As Gun-Ho's Chinese level of fluency improved, he took the HSK test again in Shanghai. The level-6 was probably beyond his current capacity. He passed the level-5 this time.

"Hmm. The level-6 is still difficult for me. Well, but I passed the level-5. My Chinese is improving. Let's make to the level-6 by the time I graduate from the university."

Gun-Ho didn't forget to keep an eye on the real estate market.

"I came to China to make money. Learning the Chinese language and going to college is just a by-product. Let's make an inquiry about the current price of my Hwaganghwawon condo."

Gun-Ho asked Dingming at the counter.

"Ding Shaojie! (Ms. Dingming) Would you make a call to this realtor's office for me and ask them how much the Hwaganghwawon condo cost to purchase. The

one with the size of 198."

"The Hwaganghwawon condo? It is the most expensive condo in Hangzhou City."

"I know. Someone asked me about this..."

Dingming made a call to the realtor's office.

"They said they don't have any Hwaganghwawon condo available on the market for now, but it costs at least 3,200,000 Yuan."

"Hmm, 3.2 million Yuan... I paid 2.6 million Yuan for it two years ago. Then the price went up by 600,000 Yuan."

Gun-Ho could feel his body temperature rise.

"I might not hit a jackpot but I surely made a lot of money from this investment. Since I purchased two of them, I made 1.2 million Yuan in total, as long as I could sell them at full price."

Gun-Ho started calculating with the electronic calculator.

"1.2 million Yuan is 144 million won. I will let them sit there for one more year."

Gun-Ho smiled in satisfaction. As Dingming saw Gun-Ho smiling, she asked him out of curiosity,

"G-jjong, why are you smiling? Any good news?"

"No, nothing. Haha."

The hot summer days continued.

Gun-Ho went to the bank to deposit.

"So many people are here in the bank as well. It's too hot and so annoying."

The bank was filled with people, not only with the people who had business with the bank but also with those people who just needed a place to stay cool. Many town people seemed to be there.

Gun-Ho pulled his number, sit on a chair, and wait for his number to be called.

"It's still hot even though the air conditioner keeps running. It's probably over 40 degrees Celsius today."

"It's actually 39 degrees today. I've heard the government's announcement from a TV earlier."

A man seemingly in his 50s talked to Gun-Ho.

"39 degrees shouldn't be this hot."

"I think the government lied and announced it was 39 degrees because factory workers are not supposed to work in this extremely hot weather with over 40 degrees. They are entitled to have their day off, and the government doesn't want to give them a day off."

"As*holes!"

"By the way, are you from Beijing? You have a Beijing accent."

Gun-Ho had different Chinese accent from the locals here. Maybe because he studied standard Chinese.

"No, but I used to live in Beijing."

"Oh, really? I thought you were from either Beijing or Dongbei (Northeast)."

Gun-Ho liked the fact that Chinese people don't recognize Gun-Ho as a foreigner.

"He will be surprised if I tell him that I am a Korean. Whether being a Beijinger or whatever, I guess I am becoming one of them."

Gun-Ho chuckled.

After he deposited money into his bank account, he came back to his restaurant.

"Dingming, here is the deposit receipt! I deposited the revenue from yesterday."

"Oh, okay."

"Dingming, I will be back later."

"G-jjong, can we have some ice cream today?"

"Sure. Also in the future, if the government announces the temperature exceeds 40 degrees, get some ice cream for all of us."

"Okay, got it."

Dingming gave him a broad smile.

G-jjong walked out of the restaurant.

"I've never used the swimming pool since I came to China even if there is a swimming pool in my apartment community."

Gun-Ho came back to his apartment and changed his clothes into short pants and went to the swimming pool in his flip-flops.

"Wow, a lot of small kids are here. Their school hasn't started yet."

The swimming pool was crowded with children of elementary school and junior high school.

"This swimming pool is still less crowded than the one in Korea since only the residents are allowed to use it here."

Gun-Ho had fun swimming. In the deeper area of the swimming pool, he could enjoy swimming without children.

"Oh my gosh, this is so good. It's a paradise."

Gun-Ho thought for the moment that maybe he wanted to live here forever.

"Nah..., I have to go back to Korea. I have to get married. I don't think I can marry here unless I find a Chinese lady to marry."

While thinking a lot of things, Gun-Ho tried all kinds of swimming strokes he knew how: a frog, a dog, and a dead body stroke. After he was done with swimming for the day, he took a shower. A lot of elementary schoolers were at the shower facility as well.

"Let's just take a quick shower here and go home. I can take a full shower at home."

When Gun-Ho walked out of the shower facility while holding a black vinyl bag with his wet bathing suit in it, he saw a man walking out of the same shower facility. He was holding a black vinyl bag just like Gun-Ho, and he was wearing short pants and flip-flops, just like Gun-Ho. The man recoiled when he saw Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho also recoiled when he saw the man.

62 The Result of The Real Estate Investment 2

The man asked first.

"Are you, by any chance, going to Zhejiang University?"

By looking at him closely, Gun-Ho was able to recognize him right away. He was the new professor at the university, who had a Ph.D. from Yale, and his name was Jien Wang.

"Oh, you are the new professor."

"Are you living in this apartment?"

"Yes, I am. I'm living in building number 6. Are you living here too?"

"Yes, mine is building number 2."

"It's really good to see you here. It's amazing that you could recognize me since there were tons of students in the university."

"You actually stood out among the students. So I remember you."

"Is that because I am an older student?"

"That's one of the reasons. Also, you have a unique name. Your name didn't seem to be a Chinese name, so I asked around and figured out that you are an international student."

"Is it your bathing suit? Inside the bag, you are holding?"

"Oh, this? No, it's not a bathing suit. It's actually a coke and a sprite. I just came here to watch people swimming."

"Oh, really? Since we met here, would you like to have a beer? There is a restaurant in front of our community's main entrance. I'm craving for a beer after

swimming."

"Haha, why not?"

The restaurant was neat and spacious; it went well with Gun-Ho's luxurious apartment. All the staff there was wearing a uniform. Gun-Ho placed an order.

"A deep-fried shrimp, a fried eggplant, and some fried pork, ..."

"That's too much. Let's stop there."

"That's okay. I'm treating you as a student to his professor."

"I think we are about the same age. By the way, you speak Chinese very well. How long have you been here in China?"

"It has been almost two years."

"Can a student afford to have expensive dishes like those you ordered? Considering that you are living in the Hobanhwawon apartment, your parents must be rich."

"They are not rich."

"The rent of this apartment is expensive. I couldn't afford to live here by myself with my salary from Zhejiang University. Fortunately, my wife is a professor at Zhejiang University as well. That's how we can afford to live here."

"I make a living for myself and pay for my rent here."

"Huh? You are a student... So, you have a job?"

"I am running a Korean restaurant in Mando Hotel. It's on Haebang road."

Gun-Ho gave him his business card which said 'CEO of Mando Food Co., Ltd.'.

"Wow! You are a CEO of Mando Food Co., Ltd.!"

"In fact, I have been working my socks off in running the restaurant and studying in the university. I hope you could take this into account and be generous when you determine my grade. Haha."

"Wow, you are amazing. You run your business while you study in the university."

The beer and the food that Gun-Ho ordered earlier came out.

"Whoa, having a beer after swimming tastes really good!"

"I was feeling rough in my throat; I guess I needed a beer. It does actually taste great. The Chinese Tsingtao beer is the best."

They took turns in pouring beer in each other's glass, and they became a bit drunk.

"When did you come back to China from the U.S.?"

"It has been a year. I started teaching at Zhejiang University last semester. Actually, this is my home town."

"Don't you get paid better at Yale University?"

"The more money you make in the U.S., the more costly your living expenses will be. I was a professor at Yale University, but it's not easy for foreign professors to be re-appointed after their contract expires. By the time of my reappointment decision, a professor from Zhejiang University who was senior to me contacted me and convinced me to come and teach at Zhejiang University. Moreover, my wife missed her home town as well. So, here we are in my home town. I think I made the right decision coming back here. I feel much better and relaxed."

"I did actually like your lecture. It's inspiring."

"Really. I am just all about theory, and I don't know much about the practical side of it. So, I do love to hang out with someone like you—G-jjong—who has been in the business for a while."

"My business card says I am the CEO of a company, but I am just running a small restaurant. I am not an expert in business as you expected."

"No, I think you are great. You are running your own business and also studying at a university simultaneously. I do admire you. Let's be friends. We are about

the same age anyway. How old are you? What's your Chinese zodiac sign?"

The professor Jien Wang gave Gun-Ho his business card.

Gun-Ho learned that Chinese people always asked a person's Chinese zodiac sign whenever they ask someone's age. When Gun-Ho told him his Chinese zodiac sign, the professor jumped to his feet and clinked his glass to Gun-Ho's.

"Oh, we are of the same age, friend!"

"Oh, really? Nice to meet you, friend!"

That day, they drank until they almost passed out. Gun-Ho had to carry Professor Wang on his back and took him to his home.

Gun-Ho never missed Professor Wang's class since he became good friends with him. Professor Wang's lecture was always concise, precise, and easy to understand.

"Okay, look at this graph. Do you see the point where the total costs line crosses the total sales line? That is the Break Even Point ("BEP")."

Gun-Ho nodded his head while writing notes. He could quickly understand the lecture because it was directly related to what he was doing at work running his business.

"What do you have to do in order to generate profits in a business? You will have to reduce the fixed costs and lower the variable costs. We will have a quiz after this lecture on the BEP analysis."

"A quiz?"

The students started buzzing about the unexpected quiz.

Gun-Ho was walking out of the lecture room after his quiz when Professor Wang approached him and said,

"Hey, my friend. I am sorry about the last time."

"Don't mention it!"

"I am expecting a friend of mine from Shanghai this evening, and we will come to your Mando hotel Korean restaurant. Why don't you join us?"

"Sure, why not? I will be at the restaurant anyway. I will see you and your friend then."

When Gun-Ho came back to his restaurant after the class, a group of Japanese international students came for dinner. Gun-Ho helped the hall staff in serving them. He was arranging chairs when Dingming came to him and said,

"G-jjong, someone is here for you. He said he is your friend."

Gun-Ho turned his head to the restaurant entrance. Professor Wang and a man in a jacket were standing at the entrance. The man was slim.

"Oh, you came. Come and have a seat!"

"G-jjong. This is my friend from Shanghai."

"Very nice meeting you."

Gun-Ho handed over his business card to the man. The man looked at the business card while lifting up his glasses. He was wearing a black plastic rim glasses and looked like an elementary school teacher in the countryside.

"Here, have a seat."

Gun-Ho pulled out a chair for him. Professor Wang's friend from Shanghai took out his business card from his pants' pocket while sitting on the chair. Gun-Ho carefully looked at his business card.

"Vice Director of Shanghai City Construction Bureau!"

Gun-Ho was wondering what level a vice director would be in the government position rank. He felt strange and amazed at the same time to meet a person that had a high rank like him because he couldn't even pass the level-9 government job exam himself after multiple attempts.

"He looked like about the same age as me. How could he make it all the way to the top? A vice director position, huh?"

Gun-Ho brought the menu book to Professor Wang and his friend.

"I don't know much about Korean food."

Professor Wang said, and the vice director from Shanghai ordered a ginseng chicken soup for himself.

"Have you had a Korean ginseng chicken soup before?"

"I went on a business trip to Korea last year. I had a ginseng chicken soup somewhere around Gwanghwamun Gate."

Gun-Ho looked at his business card again. His name was Seukang Li.

"G-jjong is a friend of mine and we are of the same age. So are you, Director Li."

Seukang Li laughed. Professor Wang called Seukang Li as Director Li even though his position was vice director. He seemed to feel more comfortable using the word director.

63 The Result of The Real Estate Investment 3

Gun-Ho, Professor Wang, and Director Li had ginseng chicken soups with Baiju, a Chinese liquor. Gun-Ho wanted to have a beer because he didn't have high alcohol tolerance. However, Director Li already ordered Baijiu and Gun-Ho decided to drink it with them.

Once the Japanese international students left the restaurant after their dinner, it became quiet.

"Did you go to the same high school?"

"No, I went to a high school in Hangzhou, and he went to a high school in Shanghai."

"Then how did you become friends?"

"We went to college together at Peking University. We were very close at that time and we used to have lamb skewers in the Wudaokou area all the time, didn't we?"

Director Li laughed.

"After having enough lamb skewers, I left to study more in the U.S. and this guy stayed in China and got a government job. This guy's father used to work as a Hyunjang (corresponding to a county governor in Korea) and his grandfather was in the Eighth Route Army."

"You, Jien Wang. You are a brilliant man who was born to be intelligent. This guy's father is a famous scholar."

"Hey, why don't you be friends with G-jjong. You are of the same age as well. We are contemporaries who are breathing the same air all these years."

"Oh, I wouldn't dare to be friends with a professor and a director!"

Director Li responded to what Gun-Ho had said,

"There are plenty of stupid people in the government. Business people are way smarter than them, and they have insight into the future of our society. I've seen a lot of hard-headed and stubborn people in the Korean government as well when I visited Korea. Of course, there are still exceptional government people in Korea."

"You two, be friends!"

Professor Wang insisted.

"Okay, friend! You are an amazing person, G-jjong. You are running a restaurant in a foreign country. I admire you. Let me pour Baijiu in your glass, here."

Director Li seemed to be getting drunk.

"Do you have any idea what my dad suggested to me when I told him that I wanted to work in the government after graduating from college?"

"Your father was still working in the government at the time right?"

"He told me to work in a factory, so I could deeply understand Chinese people and their real life. So I worked in a factory in Suzhou City for two years. It was a hot-rolled carbon steel manufacturer. This is the scars I gained from my factory life there."

Director Li rolled up his sleeves to show his burn scars on his arm; there were several.

"Hey, my Korean friend, you haven't worked in a factory before, right?"

"You have no idea. I had worked in plastic factories in Hwaseong, Pocheon, and Yangju in Korea. Look at my arms. I have a lot of burn scars as well."

Gun-Ho showed his bare arms after rolling up his sleeves.

Professor Wang and Director Li seemed to be stunned by looking at the scars in Gun-Ho's arms.

"Well, we are friends without a doubt. We need more drink. Let's have one more bottle."

The three men drank again like they were eating some very tasty food. Mae-Hyang brought more snacks to them and laughed.

"The liquor must be very delicious."

They took turns in pouring Baijiu in each other's glass. Professor Wang said to Gun-Ho after gulping his glass of Baijiu,

"You, my Korean friend. Do you know who Director Li is?"

"You are drunk, man! He is a person, right? He is right here, man."

"He might look like an elementary school teacher in the countryside, but he was the leader of the Communist Youth League of China. In addition, when he worked in the carbon steel manufacturing factory in Suzhou City, he stood out as an excellent debater supported by his knowledge and belief in socialism. He was at the time the leader of the labor union."

"Those were the good old times."

"Let's have one more drink. I'm treating you today. G-jjong treated me last time."

Professor Wang said.

That day, Gun-Ho never expected that these two men—Professor Wang and Director Seukang Li—would be a great help when he was about to have a large-scale business in China in the future.

Gun-Ho finally graduated from Zhejiang University.

"Yay! I finally graduated from a four-year college!" A person couldn't be well respected in Korea, without a four-year college diploma. He couldn't get a decent job, and it was also really hard to marry. Gun-Ho had always wondered what qualities did a person that graduated from a college in a foreign country had and how rich their family had to be to support them. Now, he graduated from a college in a foreign country himself. He had mixed feelings.

No one came to Gun-Ho's graduation ceremony because he didn't tell anybody, even the restaurant staff. Professor Wang was the only one who came and congratulated him.

"Hey, my friend. Congratulations! Why don't you stay at Zhejiang University to study more and get an MBA degree? You are a businessman. I think you should get an MBA degree."

"Nah. I'm so exhausted. I will think about it later."

Gun-Ho didn't come to China to get academic degrees. He had to make money in China.

He now had free time in his daily life since he didn't have to go to school anymore.

"Let's get the HSK level-6."

Gun-Ho already passed HSK level-5, so he just needed to push a little further in his studies to reach the level-6.

"I think I now can hear and understand Chinese better. I believe the best way to learn a foreign language is to live in that country to be exposed to that language every day."

Gun-Ho bought a preparatory book for the HSK test level-6 and studied hard.

Gun-Ho eventually received the HSK level-6 certificate. It was a happy day for him. He was as happy as the day he graduated from Zhejiang University.

"Yay! I finally got the level-6. I think I can get a decent job in Korea with this certificate. I have a Zhejiang University diploma and a proven Chinese language skill supported by the HSK certificate with the highest level—6. I believe I can get a job in a mid-size company that has a branch office in China."

Gun-Ho was thinking of selling his Hwaganghwawon condos and buying a condo in Incheon, Korea, and getting a job there.

"Nah, I guess I am too old to start a new career. I am now in my mid-30s. I have to get married. Should I keep the restaurant? Even though it doesn't generate

enough revenue? Even if I get married in Korea and come back to China, I can't support my family with the income from this restaurant. I will have a child too."

Gun-Ho now had a new problem to solve.

The cold winter was almost gone and plum trees were about to have flowers. Gun-Ho received an official notification from Mando Hotel.

"What is this? Is this an official notification from the hotel?"

As he read through the notification, Gun-Ho's face hardened.

<Dear tenants>

We would like to inform you that the management of this hotel decided to close the building for six months from June to December in order to repair the exterior wall and pipes of the hotel. Alarming cracks were found on the building exterior, and the pipes are decaying, which could cause severe health problems. This is for the safety of you and the guests of our building. The city already warned us twice about the same issues so we won't be able to delay the repair any longer.

Therefore, we will start with the repairs in June since the lease contract will expire in June. Once the repairs are completed, the current tenants will have the priority to move in first.

We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation.

- Mando Hotel

Gun-Ho was baffled.

"Are they saying that I need to close my business for six months during their repair work?"

Gun-Ho showed the notification to his staff including Dingming.

"What about us? What are we going to do?"

"You can take a six-month vacation or you can work somewhere else."

"G-jjong, what are you going to do?"

"I don't know... I am still in shock. This is so sudden."

"We will follow whatever decision you make."

"Well, we still have three months left before the hotel closes. Let's think about it."

64 The Result of The Real Estate Investment 4

Gun-Ho spent days agonizing over the six-month mandatory closing of his restaurant.

"What am I going to do? Should I look for another place to move the restaurant? If I find a new place, I probably should renovate the place, and it will cost me. I like this hotel building. It's clean, and easy for a new customer to find the restaurant location. I didn't have to change a thing here."

Gun-Ho couldn't think of any good ideas to break through the situation.

When he was agonizing over the situation while sitting at an unoccupied table, he heard someone arguing loudly from the counter. It was Dingming and Mae-Hyang.

"What's going on here?"

"That one looked down on me saying I am a Korean Chinese."

"I didn't. You are the one who looked down on me."

Their fight gave Gun-Ho a headache. This was not their first time to fight. These two ladies didn't get along and had fought each other before, but this time it seemed serious; they shook their fingers at each other and screamed loudly.

"Stop it."

"G-jjong, you always take that bi*ch's side."

Mae-Hyang complained. In fact, Gun-Ho used to ask for Mae-Hyang's help a lot for an interpretation, but he was not asking for her help anymore recently. That might give more power to Dingming in the restaurant.

The two ladies were nip and tuck in the power game.

Dingming's older sister was the hotel manager and she had a good network in the area. Mae-Hyang was doing the interpretation for Gun-Ho, and he still relied heavily on her on an important occasion. Also, her mom was the kitchen manager.

"This is putting me in a difficult position."

Gun-Ho couldn't take anyone's side; he had to be neutral.

"Maybe I should wrap things up here and go back to Korea. I'm not making that much money with this restaurant anyway."

Gun-Ho was put off by the restaurant because of all the problems it was giving him and the fact that he was not having enough income from it.

Gun-Ho read an article about the prices of condos in the West Lake area that evening. It said that the prices of condos were going to go up in the area because it was the season where a lot of people were moving to a new place. It also said that while the prices of the condos in the West Lake area would increase substantially, the prices of ordinary condos for most of the Chinese people would remain the same, just like Gangnam in Seoul.

The TV in the restaurant hall was on and the news anchor was talking about the same topic. Gun-Ho could hear Dingming's sigh.

"Those people living in fancy condos in the West Lake area are so lucky."

"Just try to be happy with what you have; otherwise, you will get stressed a lot."

Dingming pouted when she heard Gun-Ho say that to her.

"My parents are living in a condo in the Yeohang area, and their condo's price is dropping. The apartment is small about 18 pyung, maybe that's why. That condo was assigned by the government."

"Hmmm..."

"My parents' condo in Northeast is 100 ."

Mae-Hyang bragged about her parents' spacious condo in front of Dingming and

that made Dingming pout again.

Gun-Ho wanted to find out the current price of his condos.

"My Hwanghwawon condo was priced 3,200,000 Yuan last year. It should cost more now since a year had already passed."

He made a call to a realtor's office.

After ringing a few times, a man in a deep voice picked up the phone.

"Realtor's office? How much is a Hwanghwawon condo now? The 198 one."

"198? There is none on the market right now."

"Are you expecting one to come out on the market anytime soon?"

"Give me your phone number, then I will let you know once I see one on the market. It was 3,600,000 Yuan last fall, and now it costs a bit more than that. A lot of people are looking for a condo in that area because it is the moving season."

Gun-Ho said okay and hung up the phone without giving his number to the realtor.

"Wow. You can't fail in the real estate investment. He said it's 3,600,000 Yuan. I guess the price went up as much as the economic growth rate in China."

Gun-Ho decided to sell his condos and close the restaurant after the lease was up.

Spring rain was drizzling down.

Gun-Ho was looking outside the window in the restaurant hall when Mae-Hyang came to talk to him.

"G-jjong, I decided to quit."

"Why now? We still have one more month left until the closing."

"I can't stand Dingming anymore, and my mom and I decided to go back to our town in Northeast."

"Did you already talk with your mother?"

"Yes, we talked about it a lot. We want to go back to our town for now, and then we will find a way to move to Korea again. My brother is settling down in Korea right now. He rented a condo in Daerim Town."

"Really? I guess your brother is doing great."

"So we decided to move to Korea even though it will cost us."

"Hmm, if your mother leaves, who's going to manage the kitchen?"

"That smart Dingming will handle it."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho thought it wouldn't be practical to hire someone to fill up the kitchen manager spot since the restaurant would close in a month.

"Hmm, I should just close the restaurant."

Gun-Ho intended to keep the restaurant open until the lease expired, but it didn't seem to be possible.

"Well, let's close it a month earlier."

Gun-Ho was going to visit a realtor's office to put his condos on the market.

"I'd better put them on the market before Mae-Hyang moves to her home town. I can handle most of my conversations with my Chinese. However, I might need her in case I encounter complicated words during I make the sales contract."

Gun-Ho called for Mae-Hyang.

"Can you go to a realtor's office with me? The investor who asked me to buy a condo here two years ago wants to sell it now."

"You don't need me anymore. G-jjong, you speak Chinese very well now."

"There might be legal terminologies and things that I might not understand since it involves legal documents like a sales contract. I need someone who speaks perfect Chinese like you."

Gun-Ho buttered her up to take her to the realtor's office with him.

"Are you going to put the two condos on the market?"

The realtor's eyes widened because the condo owners in the West Lake area at that time didn't want to put the condos on the market. The price of the condos was on the way up and the owners wanted to wait until the price increased more.

"How much do you think I can get?"

"How much do you want to ask?"

"Well, you are the expert. You tell me."

"Someone put the condo on the market last month for 3,800,000 Yuan before he pulled it off the market. Let's price it for 4,000,000 Yuan."

"What if no one buys it because the price is too high."

"Then, what about 3,800,000 Yuan?"

"Well, I do like the 4,000,000 Yuan better."

"Leave your contact number. If I sell them for 4,000,000, you have to give me a small incentive to pay for my cigarette, okay?"

"Of course."

"Which ones are yours?"

"They are both in building number 2, unit 306 and unit 502."

"Let me see. Building number 2... they are the ones that are all completed inside, right?"

"You mean the interiors? Right, their interiors are all finished."

"Oh, then you should price them for 4,300,000 Yuan."

Gun-Ho forgot about the incomplete interior thing for a second there. The condos in China were sold with incomplete interiors. Gun-Ho's condos were all finished because he wanted to rent them out!

"Oh, I see. Then let's put them for 4,300,000 Yuan considering the cost of interiors."

Gun-Ho walked out of the realtor's office.

Mae-Hyang asked Gun-Ho while following him with short quick steps.

"G-jjong, the Korean investor who invested in the condos must be rich. That condo is very expensive, and he bought two of them. I am jealous."

"Me too."

"You can buy condos like that once your business goes well in the future."

"That's not up to me, isn't it? Huh? There is a new pizza restaurant opened over there. Let me buy two whole pizzas. Why don't you take them to the restaurant and share with the staff."

"Thank you, G-jjong. Haha."

65 Hit A Jackpot With Foreign Exchange 1

Gun-Ho sold his two condos in the West Lake area.

They sold very quickly because it was moving season. There seemed to be a lot of potential buyers waiting for a luxurious condo with a West Lake view to appear on the market. Even after Gun-Ho's condos were sold, the price of the condos in the community continued to increase. That upset him a bit.

The buyer who bought Gun-Ho's condos had offered 4,250,000 Yuan which was less than the listing price because the condo's interior was more than two years old. Gun-Ho accepted the offer and received 8,500,000 Yuan for two condos.

"I'm going to pay off my loan of 1,900,000 Yuan to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China!"

After paying off his loan, 6,600,000 Yuan was left in his bank account.

"In Korean won, it is 792 million won. I initially had 480 million won when I came to China, so I made more than 300 million won in two years and eight months. Not bad at all. I made about the salary of someone who has a decent office job with several 100 million won of yearly salary!"

He patted his bank book.

"I made more than the economic growth rate of this country as Chairman Lee said. It was the right decision acquiring the condos located in the most expensive area, so the price could increase more than the economic growth rate. If I have a chance to buy a real property in Seoul, I will buy the one located in Gangnam, not in a metropolitan area. It has to be Gangnam. Expensive condos become more expensive just like the prices of stocks that keeps on increasing. Its prices would just keep going up. That's how the world works!"

Gun-Ho set his restaurant to close on the same day Mae-Hyang would return for her home town. He asked the staff to gather and told them that,

"We have now one month left before the building closes. I wanted to keep the restaurant open until that date. However, I decided to close it earlier since we, including me, all don't have any desire or passion to serve our customers any longer."

The staff dropped their eyes while listening to Gun-Ho.

"I haven't decided yet whether I would re-open the restaurant after six months. If any of you have to work to make a living, you should get another job. I will close the restaurant for now and take some time off. If I decide to re-open the restaurant, I will contact each of you."

One kitchen lady started sobbing. Many of the staff showed tears in their eyes except Dingming, Mae-Hyang, and two other young hall staff ladies; they just lowered their head without sobbing.

"You are going to give us economic compensation, right?"

The lady who was sobbing asked.

"Economic compensation?"

Gun-Ho couldn't understand what that was. Dingming explained,

"According to labor law, a company that is partially owned and operated by a foreigner or a foreign entity must provide economic compensation to their workers."

Gun-Ho looked at Mae-Hyang.

"Economic compensation is similar to a retirement pay or severance pay."

Gun-Ho realized that he didn't clarify the severance pay matter with Mr. Byeon. Mr. Byeon should have given a certain amount of severance pay to Gun-Ho when he sold the restaurant to him. Well, at this moment, Gun-Ho could do nothing much about it. Gun-Ho regretted that he was not smarter at that time. Gun-Ho quickly calculated.

'Half of the staff worked here for three or four years, and the rest of them worked for two years. So, if I assume that their average work period is three years, then I

will have to pay 50,000 Yuan in total for their severance pay because I have to pay three months worth of salary to a staff who worked for three years as her severance pay. Now I understand why many Korean businessmen ran away when their business failed. If I refuse to pay it, I will be arrested. Let's give it to them with a smile, and think positive.'

Gun-Ho acted as if he was aware of the severance pay, but he just didn't know the word in Chinese.

"Oh, the severance pay! Of course, I will give you all your severance pay."

When Gun-Ho promised to pay them without any problem, the staff showed a broad smile.

Gun-Ho had 250,000 Yuan worth of restaurant rent saved up. He used that money to give them their severance pay. He put his staff's severance pay in an envelope and handed it to each one of them.

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho made another envelope for each staff with 500 Yuan. It was a farewell pay from Gun-Ho.

"Oh, wow, thank you so much."

The staff didn't expect to be paid more than their severance pay, and they were truly grateful for it. For Dingming and Mae-Hyang, Gun-Ho talked to them in private and gave them 2,000 Yuan worth of farewell pay to each of them.

The following day, Gun-Ho went to the restaurant.

The light was off and all the chairs were placed on the tables. Gun-Ho received a phone call from Mae-Hyang.

"G-jjong, I wanted to thank you again for the farewell pay. I am in a train station right now. I wish you good health. I might see you around in Seoul."

Mae-Hyang sounded more cheerful than when she worked in the restaurant. It was almost noon when Dingming came to the restaurant.

"G-jjing, when did you arrive here?"

"A minute ago. I already told the hotel that we are closing the restaurant."

"Umm... What will you do with all of these kitchen appliances?"

"Yeah... I don't think I can take them with me to Korea."

Gun-Ho laughed and Dingming laughed along.

"If you're planning to re-open the restaurant in the future, then you should keep them; otherwise, you should just sell them."

"Let's sell them for now."

"Do you want me to start selling them?"

"Let's do this. I already notified the tax office that I will close the restaurant, but we have to terminate Mando Food Co., Ltd. as well. Why don't you take care of it? Once you sell the kitchen appliances, you can have enough proceeds to cover the expenses of terminating Mando Food."

"Sure, I will do that as long as that's okay with you."

Gun-Ho notified the landlord to vacate the apartment.

"I closed the Korean restaurant, sold the Hwaganghwawon condos and placed Hobanhwawon apartment on the market for the next tenant. Now, I am ready to go back to Korea."

The apartment was rented to another Korean the day after it was placed on the market.

"The new tenant wants to move in after ten days. So I have ten days left here in China. I don't have to go to school and I don't have to go to the restaurant to work. Let's go to Shanghai and exchange the money in my bank account with Korean won, and let's make a short trip around China."

Gun-Ho went to Kookmin Bank in Hongqiao, Shanghai to exchange his money from Yuan to Won. He already transferred the money from his bank account with

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China to his account with Kookmin Bank.

"I'd like to exchange 6,600,000 Yuan to Korean won."

"Wow, that is a considerable amount of money. Did you close your business here?"

The bank assistant manager seemed to be surprised by looking at the amount of money Gun-Ho wanted to exchange.

"That's right."

"For this amount of money, I will have to file a report. Do you have the paperwork that shows the closing of your business?"

"Here is a copy of the certificate of cessation of my business."

The bank staff who was assisting Gun-Ho looked at his computer screen for a while.

"After exchanging to Korean won, we can just leave the money to the same account, right?"

"Right."

"You must have succeeded in your business here in China. I've seen many business people who failed here since it's not easy to run a business in China."

The bank staff said while handing the bank book to him with a smile. Gun-Ho was frightened when he verified his account balance on his bank book. It said 1,174,800,000 won instead of 790,000,000 won, the amount he expected to see on the bank book.

"I think something is not right."

"What's the matter? Today's selling rate is 178 won." (this was the exchange rate at that time)

"Selling rate!"

Gun-Ho followed the bank staff's finger to the electronic board he was

indicating. The selling rate was clearly 178 won."

"Wow! 178 won!"

The buying rate applied when Gun-Ho had exchanged Korean won to Chinese Yuan two years ago when Gun-Ho had come to China was 120 won. The selling rate now was 178 won. Gun-Ho shivered.

It could be said that Gun-Ho failed his restaurant business in China. However, he made a fortune in his real estate investment. After failing a restaurant business in Noryangjin, Gun-Ho came to China with 480 million won and he made almost 700 million won with that seed money.

* For your reference: As of December 18, 2017, the selling rate of Yuan is 1:156.33.

66 Hit A Jackpot With Foreign Exchange 2

Gun-Ho felt great; he felt like he could fly.

"Oh, my gosh. Now I have 1,174,800,000 won. Hahaha. In addition to that, I still have 20,000 Yuan that I had saved up in preparation for the restaurant rent for the next period; it is still in my bank account with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. I left it there so I could use it during my stay in China before I return to Korea. I am so happy. Hahaha."

Gun-Ho laughed and jumped around in his apartment by himself.

"You fool!"

Gun-Ho felt like he heard Chairman Lee's voice.

"You are jumping around in excitement for only 1.1 billion won? You fool!"

Gun-Ho straightened up his posture.

"That's right. I shouldn't be crazily excited about only 1.1 billion won. As Master Park had told me before, I am destined to be awfully rich."

Gun-Ho was planning to have a tour in China before returning to Korea.

"This is a good opportunity for me to have a tour in China before I leave this country. Let's travel and broaden my experience!"

Gun-Ho started off his trip by flying to Beijing and visited the Forbidden City.

"This is the palace where Chinese emperors used to live."

Gun-Ho then went to the Wudaokou area in front of the Peking University, where Professor Wang of Zhejiang University and Director Li of Shanghai City Construction Bureau used to hang out when they were in college. Gun-Ho could see a lot of restaurants serving lamb skewers.

Gun-Ho felt his legs got tired and became exhausted after seeing the Forbidden City and the Summer Palace where Empress Dowager Cixi used to have fun hanging out.

"It began to rain. Let's have a drink at the lamb skewer restaurant."

Gun-Ho ordered lamb skewers and a Tsingtao beer.

"I feel like I can drink more than the usual today."

Gun-Ho looked out of the window while having beer and lamb skewers. People outside were walking with short quick steps in the rain with an umbrella.

"I've been in China for almost three years now. I guess my time in China was well spent. I grew my money to 1.170 billion won and graduated from Zhejiang University. Moreover, I've always wanted to learn a foreign language and now I can speak Chinese; I obtained the level-6 which is the highest level of HSK. I think my life in China was a success."

Gun-Ho ordered one more plate of lamb skewers and two bottles of Tsingtao beer. He already reserved a room in a three-star hotel, not an inn or Chodaeso.

"Okay, let's make more money. Next time I come to Beijing, I will stay in a five-star hotel instead of a three-star hotel."

Gun-Ho continued drinking his beer slowly while leaning on the window sill and listening to the raindrops.

Gun-Ho flew to Urumqi City where many Uighurs—one of China's ethnic minorities—were living. They indeed looked totally different from Chinese people. Old Uighurs looked like they were Russians; they were just sitting without doing anything. They glanced at Gun-Ho who was carrying a travel bag.

"There are lots of sheep ranches in this area. I want to taste lamb meat produced from here."

Gun-Ho went to a traditional market. He found a lamb skewer restaurant while walking in the market. It was shabby but crowded with people and filled with smoke created by grilling lamb meat. The restaurant's walls and columns were already blackened by the smoke.

"The food in this restaurant must be delicious since a lot of people are eating here."

Gun-Ho ordered lamb skewers and a beer.

The restaurant owner wearing a traditional white rectangle-shaped hat brought a plate of lamb skewers to Gun-Ho. The chunk of lamb meat skewered in a pin was as big as a walnut.

"Wow. These blackened lamb skewers didn't look delicious, but it is actually very tasty."

The lamb skewers were not made of frozen meat. They were using fresh meat for the skewers.

"I believe this could sell well in Korea. It can become very popular!"

Gun-Ho thought that lamb skewers could be a good new restaurant menu, and then he shook his head.

"No! no more restaurant business. A restaurant business requires a lot of labor, and I can't hire that many staff in Korea and expect to generate profits. I have to start a big company."

Gun-Ho decided that he would never do a small business by renting a space like a restaurant; he was sick and tired of it.

A Uighur gentleman who was sitting next to Gun-Ho talked to him.

"By looking at your travel bag, I guess you are maybe a Taiwanese, aren't you?"

"No, I am a Korean."

"Korean!"

That gentleman seemed to be surprised, and he started asking Gun-Ho a lot of questions about Korea such as its population, number of military soldiers, size of the country, navy power, combat plane, etc.

"Why are you asking me all these?"

"Because I am envious of Korea. If we have the same power as Korea has, we would have achieved our independence from China already, but we have a population of only 7,000,000 people. Whew."

The Uighurs gentleman let out a deep sigh.

"Isn't it good to be a part of China? China has been developing a lot and it is one of the most powerful nations. I heard the country provides a lot of affirmative action programs to ethnic minorities, doesn't it?"

The gentleman smiled cynically while shaking his head from side to side implying a negative answer.

"What's your occupation?"

"I am a professor at Urumqi University."

The gentleman continued drinking his liquor; he looked sad.

While staying at Urumqi, Gun-Ho received a full-body massage from a beautiful woman masseur who looked like Russian. It cost him 300 Yuan.

"Having money is good. Someone is willing to wash my smelly feet with warm water as long as I have money."

After visiting Urumqi, Gun-Ho continued his trip and stopped by Chengdu and the enormous Three Gorges Dam before he returned to Hangzhou City.

When he came back to his home in Hangzhou City, he felt extremely tired and slept all day long.

"What time is it? It's already 10 AM. How long have I slept then? I don't remember having dinner last night."

Gun-Ho wanted to say good-bye to Professor Wang at Zhejiang University before he left China, so he made a call to him.

"Uh? G-jjong? I was going to call you. Aren't you going to continue your studies to MBA?"

"I closed my Korean restaurant. The hotel will begin its renovation construction soon. I want to see my friend before I return to Korea."

"Really?"

"Let's meet at Pinghoo Restaurant & Bar in the West Lake area around 5 PM. I guess you don't have a lecture at the time?"

"Isn't it an expensive restaurant? Let's go somewhere else that is less pricey."

Pinghoo Restaurant & Bar in the West Lake area was the one where Gun-Ho met the branch manager of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China for the first time.

"That's okay. Come to the restaurant. I'm the CEO, remember?"

"Haha. Okay. See you there then."

Gun-Ho and Professor Wang sat at the window-side table.

A staff lady wearing a Chinese traditional dress—Qipao—poured green tea in their cups.

"Longjing tea of Hangzhou City is the best green tea."

"I used to drink this tea all the time when I was in the U.S. studying for my Ph.D. This tea clears my mind."

"I agree with you. I drink this tea whenever I'm trying to figure out something in running my business."

"Aren't you going to do any other business in China? Do you have anything on your mind about what kind of business you are going to do once you return to Korea?"

"I am interested in investing in real estate."

"Real estate? A developing country has highly restrictive policies on real estate, doesn't it?"

"In fact, I didn't really make that much money in running a Korean restaurant in

China."

"Hmm... of course. You should have had a client base of local people for your restaurant to make money. With Korean workers and students as your only customers, your restaurant would most likely not generate enough revenue."

"That's why I had invested in real estate while I was running the restaurant. I had purchased the Hwaganghwawon condos two and a half years ago and recently sold them."

"Oh, really? The condos there are really expensive. I guess maybe the president of Zhejiang University could afford to live in a condo like that. It's amazing. So, you must have made a lot of money from it, huh?"

"Yeah, a little."

"Let me see. You brought Korean Won to China two and a half years ago... Then you must have made a lot of money from the foreign exchange as well, in addition to the proceeds from your real estate investment."

"You surely are a professor. Do you think the currency's exchange rate will increase more in the near future?"

67 Hit A Jackpot With Foreign Exchange 3

Professor Wang answered to Gun-Ho's question while sipping his Longjing tea, whether the currency's exchange rate would increase more in the near future.

"Well... How would I possibly know that? I am not the son of Zhuge Liang."

"You are the professor who is teaching Financial Management in college."

"Actually, I am also a member of the Financial Service Committee of the province and a member of the Real Estate Development Committee. I believe Chinese Yuan won't rise anymore because the export to the U.S. will drop otherwise. If Yuan keeps increasing, the government will start suppressing its currency with various policies."

"Hmm... I see."

"The real estate market has recently been overheated, so the government thought of pulling out their sword to intervene, and then they decided not to."

"Why not?"

"They decided to let the market control it for now; so Chinese people can build their wealth and it will attract more foreign companies. In that respect, you were lucky. I didn't have enough seed money to invest in real estate. I'm envious of you. There are five things you need in order to become rich."

"Five things to become rich?"

"Someone made it up for fun. I will tell you later. Haha."

"Silly!"

"So, are you going to do the real estate investment again in Korea?"

"The real estate price in Korea is already too high. I'm not sure if I have enough

funds to do that."

"A developing country government curbs speculative investment in real estate. I guess they will try to take excessive profits from them to control the market. Also, the population cliff will bring negative effect on the real estate price. However, there have to be certain areas where the real estate prices are still rising, just like the Hwaganghwawon condos in the West Lake area. That should be the area you want to focus on for your real estate investment."

"Hmm, I know where. There is a district in Seoul, called Gangnam. No matter what happens to the real estate market in Korea, the real estate price in Gangnam is always on the rise."

"That's the one! Did you say Gangnam? The price in that area will increase even more if there is a lack of supply and the demand is high."

"You think so?"

"The price will increase in Gangnam. The fundamental reasons are important for the price hike in stocks and real estate, however, you shouldn't ignore mass psychology. You should research Gangnam. We say Gangnam to indicate the southern area of Yangtze River in China. Korea has Gangnam, as the name of an area. Haha."

"Right. Actually, it's the southern area of Han River in Seoul."

"Really? When are you going back to Korea?"

"The day after tomorrow."

"That early? Are you ready to go?"

"Yes. I even finished my tours in other areas of China."

"Call me when you arrive in Korea. It's really good to have a Korean friend. Let's drink up."

"Sure!"

The two men stood up and crossed each other's right arms and drank their liquor

to show their friendship.

Gun-Ho came back to Korea.

He left all his belongings in China except; the Kookmin Bank book showing his 1,174,800,000 won, the bank book from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China with his 20,000 Yuan, the diploma of Zhejiang University, and the HSK level-6 certificate. He decided to stay in his parents' home in Incheon before he finds his own place. Gun-Ho's mother welcomed his son.

"Are you back for good?"

"Yes, mom. But I will stay here for one or two days and will move to my own place."

"Did you already find one?"

"I will find one."

"How was China? What are you going to do now?"

"I graduated from a four-year college in China, and I saved some money by running a Korean restaurant there as well. I am thinking if I should find a job or start my own business."

Gun-Ho showed his college diploma to his parents.

"Oh, but it's all written in Chinese; I'm not sure what it says."

"It's a diploma of Zhejiang University, majored in accounting."

"I'm so proud of you, my son."

Gun-Ho's mother patted the college diploma and said,

"Someone wanted to introduce a girl for you but I couldn't say anything. You should get settled and married soon."

"My marriage? I don't want to hear it, mom."

Gun-Ho got annoyed. Gun-Ho's mother looked at Gun-Ho's reaction and

wondered if he had a girlfriend already, but didn't want to tell her yet.

Gun-Ho was already used to a spacious apartment living life. He felt suffocated living in his parents' shabby 18 pyung townhouse apartment. Moreover, he had to share a tiny bathroom with his parents; he felt very uncomfortable.

"My mom was always envious of people living in the apartment in Guweol Town, Incheon where my aunt is living. She used to talk about how lucky those people are. I can purchase a larger condo than that apartment in Guweol Town close to Incheon City Hall, and start a spacious café or a fast food restaurant like Lotteria. I think I can have a nice life in Incheon with the money I have."

Gun-Ho was thinking while laying down on the floor in the small room of his parents' apartment.

"And I can get a luxurious car. People will see me as a rich man in Incheon. No, I guess I have to move to Seoul so I can grow more."

Gun-Ho repeatedly drew and erased his life's blueprint in his head before falling asleep.

The townhouse apartment that Gun-Ho's parents were living in was a rental apartment with monthly rent. It was a shabby twenty-something years old apartment, but he felt stable staying in his parents' home. He liked the breakfast time, as well with his parents.

"Mom, one more bowl of rice please."

He had steamed rice with Doenjang-jjigae and Kimchi for his breakfast and burped loudly.

"I love my mom's food."

Gun-Ho decided to go out and find a OneRoom after breakfast.

"Let's go back to Noryangjin!"

Gun-Ho felt comfortable to go back to the area he was familiar with. He went to a realtor's office behind the Dongjak District Office; he used to live in the area.

The realtor showed him a OneRoom. The room was on the third floor of a shabby low-rise building.

"Hmm... This is not very..."

Gun-Ho didn't like it.

When he was running a Vietnamese noodle restaurant, a room like this one was more than enough to Gun-Ho. However, he was different now. He already tasted a luxurious life with a spacious apartment in China. He thought he didn't want to live in a room like that anymore.

"Hmm... Let's pay more and live in a clean office-tel!"

Gun-Ho headed to the Noryangjin elementary school area to find an office-tel, and then changed his mind.

"Let's not stay in Noryangjin. The area is dingy and too busy with exam preparers. Let's try another area. Moreover, Noryangjin has never worked in favor of me! I had studied for years here for the level-9 government job exam to fail, and my Vietnamese restaurant was a failure as well! I don't think I can get along with Noryangjin. Let's try somewhere else!"

Gun-Ho thought of moving to Gangnam for a second and then decided to move to Yeongdeungpo District which was closer to Incheon where his parents were living.

"I should wait before I move to Gangnam. I want to grow more before going to Gangnam!"

When he saw a not-so-expensive office-tel behind the Yeongdeungpo traditional market, he made a lease contract right away. The monthly rent was 500,000 won with a security deposit of ten million won. The room was large and it came with a refrigerator, washer, gas oven, air conditioner, etc.

"I just need to call KT for the Internet connection."

Gun-Ho's life in Yeongdeungpo District started.

Gun-Ho purchased a nice computer and a small TV. He also bought a new bed

and a desk as well.

"I will pursue my dreams here. I already received one of the richest man's energy —Marwin, from China and I will erect myself here.

Gun-Ho repeated that he would erect himself three times loudly.

"Sh*t, something else down there erected."

68 New Start in Korea 1 - PART 1

Gun-Ho read an economic newspaper every day and surfed on the Internet in his office-tel in Yeongdeungpo District ("Yeongdeungpo").

"Since I made a lot of money by investing in real estate in China, let's do that in Korea too. Let's start by researching the real estate market in Korea."

Gun-Ho wanted to buy a condo located in Gangnam.

At that time, TowerPalace in Dogok Town was the most popular condo, and RaemianFirstige in Banpo Town was under construction.

"Sh*t! They are too expensive!"

Gun-Ho thought he wanted to buy a condo in Gangnam and run a small business, or get a job just like he did when he was in China. However, the condo price was not affordable.

"I won't be able to buy even one condo with the money I made from China!"

Gun-Ho was disappointed.

"When I was living in a OneRoomTel in Dujeong Town, Cheonan City, I was jealous of people living in a new condo there. The condo price of Gangnam is five times of that condo in Dujeong Town. The housing price polarization is so extreme! Should I get a loan to buy it? Who's going to pay for the interest then? I don't even have a job."

Gun-Ho had no idea what to do.

He was sure that the price of a condo in Gangnam will increase, but he couldn't afford to buy one. That made him sigh. He started searching on the Internet again.

"What is this? They are photos of the current Apgujeong Town and the same town 60 years ago where there was a pear tree farm. It's a black-and-white photo. Who uploaded this kind of comparison photos?"

There was a description of the photos below it.

[Oh my goodness, father. You should have bought the land there at that time.]

Gun-Ho chuckled.

"There still has to be a land like that. We just don't know which one. If it is easy to find out, everyone will be rich."

Gun-Ho bought an economic newspaper every day from the convenience store downstairs in his office-tel building. One day, he saw an advertisement there.

[Lecture for auction, you need a skill for auction.]

"There is a private institution for auction. I've always wanted to learn it. Maybe I should take the course. Oh, there is a profile of the instructor."

Gun-Ho read the instructor's profile.

[He started with only 20 million won and within three years he purchased a building. Bruce Kang is the legend in the auction field. He has the hand of Midas]

"Did he really start with 20 million won and bought a building with the proceeds? What kind of name is it? He has probably been in the U.S., huh? The course fee is 400,000 won per month. Let's try it. The institution is not far from here; it's in Yongsan District."

Gun-Ho registered for the auction course.

Gun-Ho didn't buy a car yet.

Since he used to ride an Audi in China, he didn't want to get any car less than that. He used public transportation to go to the private institution in Yongsan District.

"The course starts at 2 PM which is not the usual commuting time for work, so the bus is almost empty."

There were many housewives and old retired men in the auction class.

The instructor, Bruce Kang came out and started talking about his success.

"I started with 20 million won and bought a villa at an auction. I loaned the amount short from a bank. After acquiring the villa, I repaired and renovated it a bit before putting it back on the market. Once it was sold, I purchased another real estate at an auction with the proceeds. After repeating this process ten times, I finally had significant seed money."

Someone raised a question.

"Since you repeatedly purchased and sold the real property several times in a short time, shouldn't transfer tax be a problem?"

"If you worry about transfer tax, you can't do an auction. There is a way you can avoid transfer tax though."

"What if a tenant or a creditor refuses to vacate the property?"

The instructor chuckled and said,

"That's not a problem at all. There is a way to handle it. I will tell you all about it."

Bruce Kang continued his story about acquiring a building with the proceeds he made out of purchasing and selling a villa repeatedly. He said the price of the building was now exceeding 10 billion won. Gun-Ho looked around.

"The housewives and retired old men were all drooling over his story."

Finally, the auction class started after Bruce Kang's introduction.

Another instructor came out and started the class. He brought a copy of a real estate registration and explained about the different sections in the registration: 'Gab Gu' and 'Eul Gu'.

"You can request to receive a copy of a real estate registration from a website of Supreme Court, so you can do it at home."

"Can anyone do that? It doesn't have to be the owner of the real property to request it?"

"Of course."

Gun-Ho thought that he would get a copy of the real estate registration of the townhouse apartment where his parents were living. The instructor continued to explain something about a real estate registration.

"Okay, look at here. This section here is called 'Gab Gu.' It shows the ownership of the real property. You can see who actually owns this real property."

"If there is a loan from a bank, it will show on the 'Eul Gu' then."

"That's right. Any changes in the rights, other than the ownership right will be recorded in this section. If you loan money from a bank and used this real estate property as a security for the loan, or your credit card company seized the real property because you defaulted in your payment, then those facts will be shown in this 'Eul Gu' section."

Gun-Ho gradually learned about real estate.

"I didn't know anything about it when I invested in China. I was just lucky."

Gun-Ho felt a sense of relief.

When Gun-Ho came back home, he opened the Supreme Court website to request a copy of the real estate registration of his parents' townhouse apartment.

"What is it? Download and install a security program?"

"Okay, I did. It's now asking the name of the owner."

Gun-Ho called his father and asked the owner's name.

"The owner's name? Why do you need his name?"

"I just need it."

"Let me look at the lease agreement. Hold on."

Gun-Ho's father gave the owner's name to Gun-Ho.

Once Gun-Ho entered the owner's name, it allowed Gun-Ho to print out a copy

of the real estate registration.

"Hmm, the owner's name is the same as the name on the registration. It's convenient."

Gun-Ho took a close look at the registration.

"What is this? The owner loaned 30 million won from Shinhan Bank and he has another loan of 10 million won from a credit union."

Gun-Ho started analyzing the real estate registration.

"If this townhouse is sold by auction, can my dad take his security deposit back? I believe he told me that the security deposit was 20 million won. I guess he can get it back since that townhouse is worth 100 million won according to my mom. I believe I heard that the area would be redeveloped soon, but no one talks about it anymore. Is it canceled?"

Gun-Ho took out a cigarette and started smoking.

"Should I buy a condo for my parents? I can use 100 million won out of 1,100 million won I have. Then they don't have to pay the monthly rent. I can buy a condo under my name."

Gun-Ho closed his eyes and thought for a second, and then opened his eyes again.

"No, it's not the time for it. I can do it later. They are fine with the apartment for now."

Gun-Ho made a call to his mother.

"Mom, are you okay with the apartment you are living in right now?"

"This apartment? I wish this was my own apartment."

"Just wait for a few years, mom."

"You became mature, my boy. Thank you for saying it. Haha."

69 New Start in Korea 1 - PART 2

Gun-Ho had nothing to do in the mornings since the auction class started in the afternoon.

All he did was reading an economic newspaper and surfing the web.

"I don't have to feel pressured. Even though I don't make money for a year, it will cost me only about 20 million won."

Gun-Ho sometimes went to a public library to read books he hadn't have time for. He read some liberal arts books or business books.

"Maybe I should invest some money in stocks. I don't want to invest a lot because it's risky. Let's try 50 million won."

Gun-Ho studied stock charts.

"By looking at the trading volume and the moving average lines, Daehan Logistics, Lotte Chemical, and QM Steel look good. In addition, Daehan Logistics is on the market for M&A. Once it is sold to a big company, its stock price will hike. Lotte Chemical looks good too. QM Steel produces stainless steel pipes and it has a low debt ratio."

Gun-Ho had work experience in accounting, in addition to his studies in accounting at Zhejiang University. He could quickly read a company's financial statements. Gun-Ho selected these three companies and traded them on a daily basis. He sometimes lost and sometimes gained. His eyes hurt after looking at his computer monitor for long hours.

"They said that Daehan Logistics had been on the market but I don't see any movement related to it. Its stock price doesn't move and it's annoying. They said that CJ, Kumho Asiana Group, and Lotte Group are interested in acquiring it, but nothing happened yet."

Gun-Ho's expectation toward Daehan Logistics lowered. The volume of Lotte Chemical got low. Many of their products are exported to overseas including

China, but the stock trading volume became low. Let's sell them once the price recovers to the original price I purchased at."

Gun-Ho didn't make money from Lotte Chemical either.

"The chart and the trading volume looks good. I'm not sure who is pressing the price."

Gun-Ho made some money from QM Steel.

"I invested 10 million won into QM Steel and the price went up by 3.5%. Even after I subtract the stock trading fee, I still made 300,000 won."

Gun-Ho went to an ATM close to his office-tel and withdrew 300,000 won he just made from the QM Steel stock trading.

"It's not bad at all. I made 300,000 won in two days."

Gun-Ho went to Gyeongbang Department Store, and bought t-shirts and a jacket with the 300,000 won; he felt like it was free money. He had an extravagant meal in a restaurant located on the top of the department store building.

"Let's sell some of Daehan Logistics and Lotte Chemical, and put them into QM Steel."

Gun-Ho invested 300,000 more in QM Steel and had fun doing something else.

QM Steel had potential. On the following day, Gun-Ho closely monitored the stock movement of QM Steel. Its stock price was exceeding the market price, and Gun-Ho sold his stocks at a good price while monitoring the one-minute chart.

"I made 200,000 won today."

Once Gun-Ho started making money by stock trading with QM Steel, he didn't want to do anything else but doing stocks in his office-tel.

"It's time to go to the auction class. Should I skip the class today? Or should I go? The stock market is still open."

Gun-Ho decided to go to the class.

"I should know about auction and I already paid for the course. It's hard to take my eyes off the stock chart though."

The instructor of the auction class explained about how to participate in an auction at a courthouse.

"There are a lot of websites showing the auction items. To have more details on the items, you can register certain websites by paying a small membership fee. If you see one you really like, you will have to go see it yourself."

The auction was interesting, maybe because it is easily found in daily life.

"Before you go see the item yourself, you should read and understand the information provided by the court website. Once a property is sold at an auction, it releases the financial institution's debt; however, you have to be careful with the issues with a tenant, right of superficies, and the Imchi right."

A student raised his hand and asked a question.

"What is Imchi right? I saw a banner on a building on the way to the class today; it said it was exercising its Imchi right."

"Imchi right is a legal term. It is created when one party entrusted money or objects to another party, and the receiving party promised to keep it safe. Usually, the construction company or renovation company exercise this right when they didn't get paid for their work."

Gun-Ho was not sure if he fully understood what the instructor said.

"A legal term is always difficult to understand."

Gun-Ho spent money more easily than before since he had been making some money from day trading. He now took a taxi instead of a bus or subway when he came home from his auction class in the private institution in Yongsan to his office-tel in Yeongdeungpo.

"A bus doesn't run often and I don't get a seat on a bus after the class because the bus is often full during the hours."

The taxi fare was not a big deal to Gun-Ho anymore.

There was no auction class today.

Gun-Ho felt lazy cooking his breakfast. He went to a porridge house close to his office-tel to have his breakfast; he had a vegetable porridge.

"Let's do the day trading with QM Steel today unless I see other exceptionally good stocks that exceed the average market price."

Gun-Ho sat his desk and opened the online stock trading website and logged in by entering his login ID, password, and his authorization certificate.

"Huh? What is this? The price stays the same and the trading volume is zero?"

It was strange. Gun-Ho clicked the official announcement.

"What? The company might be delisted and they are looking into it right now? Its president is accused of embezzlement? I invested 30 million won in QM Steel. Trading of this stock is not allowed until all become clear. F*ck! I can't touch my money until then."

Stock investment was difficult. Gun-Ho spent time studying about stocks and analyzing financial statements, and he carefully selected bottom-priced stocks to play with, but still, this sort of things happened to him.

An investigation of delisting of a company occurred when there was; embezzlement, breach of duty, fabricating a sales report or giving inaccurate publicly available information in bad faith, that was material enough to affect an investors' decision. Gun-Ho entered the stock discussion forum where he could get various information.

"The president took the company's money and ran away."

"The majority shareholder entity of QM Steel will start its rehabilitation process."

"That president committed embezzlement before, and he did it again during his probation period and already flew to another country."

All sorts of rumors came out.

Gun-Ho felt drained. What if he invested all of his 1,170 million won into the QM Steel stocks? The thought of it terrified him.

"Whoa, it's not difficult to lose everything in a day."

What Chairman Lee said crossed Gun-Ho's mind.

"I don't do stocks because I can't figure out the other player's cards. That's why I don't do stocks."

Gun-Ho could picture Chairman Lee smiling.

"What if they decided to delist the company stock? I will likely lose my shares. They might declare bankruptcy. Sh*t!"

Gun-Ho was so worried that he didn't even feel hungry for lunch.

"I lose 30 million won from my investment in QM Steel; if I add my living cost and the office-tel rent of 20 million won to it, I will lose 50 million won in total for the year... I can lose all of the money I made from China gradually in this way!"

Gun-Ho felt scared.

70 New Start in Korea 2 - PART 1

Gun-Ho had early experience investing in stocks. He invested all of his money that he had saved up during his work in factories and a sunshine loan of 10,000,000 won he received, in stocks.

It took six months to lose everything he had invested in stocks at the time. He was left with the sunshine loan of 10,000,000 won and he spent his early 30s in paying off the debt.

"I shouldn't repeat my early mistake."

Gun-Ho, let out a deep sigh.

Afterwards, while he was working at YS Tech in Dunpo, Asan, Gun-Ho used the company's money to invest in a waste management company's stocks and made 520 million won.

"I know I shouldn't have used the company's money, but the money I made from it became my seed money. Using that seed money I started my first business in Noryangjin—a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant. It didn't work out well, but I made a significant amount of money from the subsequent investment in real estate in China."

Gun-Ho reminisced about the stock investment of InsunENT.

"Little people like me can't possibly have any inside information about a company to determine which company to invest money in. I just heard from Chairman Lee who I met at a fishing site that a waste disposal business would have a bright future, and I subsequently invested in the waste management company believing what Chairman Lee said."

Gun-Ho blamed himself for the recent failure with his stock investment. He should have focused on the company's business and its potential, rather than analyzing stock charts and the trading volume to produce profits in a short period of time.

"Whew, I still have a lot to learn to be a big player in the business field. Even Chairman Lee who is loaded with extensive life and business experience doesn't do stocks without knowing the other player's cards!"

Well, Gun-Ho missed him.

"I haven't thanked him yet. I've been too busy after I returned from China. As a matter of fact, he sort of guided me in the direction of working in accounting and investing in the InsunENT stocks!"

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Jong-Suk.

After a few ringing, Jong-Suk picked up the phone.

"What were you doing? Why aren't you picking up the phone quickly?"

"Oh, bro. How's your auction school thing?"

"It's okay. Are you still going to the fishing site?"

"Nah, I haven't been there lately. I am going to mountain climbing instead of these days, because of my team leader at work. He loved it, so I follow him to a mountain."

"You haven't seen Chairman Lee recently then."

"Right, I haven't."

"Hey, do you want to go fishing this Sunday?"

"This Sunday? I will have to get back to you on that. Our factory is expecting new machine equipment and I have to see how it goes. I will let you know tomorrow."

"Okay. Make it work, okay? I will buy you lunch, nice one."

"Bro, did you buy a car?"

"No, not yet. I will rent a car."

"Take the subway. I will pick you up."

"I can't bring my fishing gears to the subway. I will rent a car. I can afford it."

"Okay. I will talk to you soon."

Jong-Suk called, and he said that he could go fishing on Sunday.

It was spring. Magnolia flowers were in full blossom. The weather in China was gloomy, but the weather in Korea was bright and mild. Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk met at the Pocheon fishing site.

"Hey, Jong-Suk. Good to see you!"

"Bro, are you done with the auction course?"

"No, not yet."

"Complete your learning on auction as soon as possible and become a real estate mogul."

"Save it. You have to have something, to begin with in order to become a mogul."

"Grab some land here in Pocheon by auction. I heard a lot of factories here are selling at an auction because they are not doing well these days."

"Haha. I don't have enough money to buy a factory. I'm thinking of buying a townhouse."

"It seems that Chairman Lee didn't come fishing today. I don't see Manager Gweon either."

"Does Manager Gweon still assist Chairman Lee? That man who was discharged from the military. He said he was a lieutenant colonel, right?"

"Oh, that man? Yes, he is still with Chairman Lee. Haha. He was actually not a lieutenant colonel, but a major. Chairman Lee was just making a joke about it."

"Right. That's more like it. He was too young for a lieutenant colonel. He seemed to be loyal though."

"Yeah. He doesn't talk much. When I met them last year, he told me that he was

related to Chairman Lee. He said Chairman Lee is his second cousin. Chairman Lee had helped him a lot since he was a student."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk had a lot to catch up while fishing. Jong-Suk was an outgoing person and he seemed to be still in touch with friends from Incheon and Bucheon; he knew how those friends were doing these days.

"You are in the know and nosy!"

"I am different from you, bro. You don't go out a lot. It has always been that way. When you were in high school, I once went to your home. Do you know what your mom told me at that time?"

"What did she say?"

"She said, her son was a homebody and he always stayed home reading cartoons."

"Haha, was I? Hey, let's have sashimi. I'm treating you. I saw a big sashimi restaurant around Millak Town in Uijeongbu City on the way here. They have a spacious parking lot too. Let's go there."

"Sounds great. Let's go!"

Gun-Ho was really hoping to see Chairman Lee that day. Since he didn't see him, he decided to come to the same fishing site the following Sunday.

On the following Sunday, Gun-Ho decided to go to the fishing site by himself.

"I can't ask Jong-Suk to come with me every time I want to go fishing. Jong-Suk is now Assistant Manager and he must be busy with his work."

Gun-Ho rented a car.

"I want to stop by the Kyobo bookstore before going to the fishing site. I want to read the book, 'Power Shift' and 'Source of Wealth.' I can't use the money invested in QM Steel anyway to invest in some other stocks. Let's read books and try to have inner peace."

Gun-Ho stopped by at Kyobo bookstore on the way to the Pocheon fishing site to buy books. He was heading out when he saw heavy traffic on the road.

"Huh? What's going on? The road is covered with combat police. There must be a protest march today."

Gun-Ho craned his neck out of his car window.

"No Four Major Rivers Project!"

"It will kill the environment. We are against the Four Major Rivers Project!"

"No to Myung-Bak Lee!"

The year when Gun-Ho returned to Korea from China was the presidential election year. One of the presidential candidate—Myung-Bak Lee's campaign promise was the Four Major Rivers Project. The opposing side attacked his campaign vigorously. People from the environmental organization came out on the street with placards showing their opposition to the project.

Protesters ranted with a megaphone, and the combat police were trying to block them with shields.

"I'm not very interested in protesting. Let's get out of here quickly!"

Gun-Ho didn't have experience of protesting since he didn't have a real college campus life. He graduated from a cyber college which evidently provided no campus life and when he went to Zhejiang University in China, he couldn't fully enjoy his college life because of his age.

"The protest will go on until the presidential election is over."

Gun-Ho headed to Pocheon by taking a different route from what he originally planned, while passing Donam and Ssangmun Town instead of the riverside road.

"Here is a paradise. It's so quiet here. Even though the world is noisy, I can have my peace of mind by looking at the quiet river."

Gun-Ho walked down to the reservoir while carrying his fishing rod.

It was a fine sunny day with some clouds in the sky. This was the Peach Blossom Land.

Gun-Ho saw two men fishing. They looked like Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon. Gun-Ho approached them and it was them.

71 New Start in Korea 2 - PART 2

The two men turned their head when they heard Gun-Ho.

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo."

"Hi, how are you? Long time no see. How are you, Manager Gweon?"

Manager Gweon stood up and extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake with a smile.

"I heard you went to China. Are you coming back for good?"

"Yes, sir."

"How was China? If I remember correctly, you ran a Korean restaurant over there."

"Right. I had a Korean restaurant and also invested some in real estate too."

"Hmm... I'm not sure about the restaurant, but I believe you probably made some money from your real estate investment."

"Huh? Oh, yes... a little..."

"Haha, you did? Have you thought of what you want to do in Korea?"

"I haven' decided yet, but I am taking a course about auction."

"He had done his investment in real estate in China, and now he wants to know about auction, right? Lieutenant Colonel Gweon?"

Manager Gweon jumped up once he heard Chairman Lee calling him Lieutenant Colonel.

"Uncle, oh no, Chairman Lee, stop calling me like that. People will believe you."

"If you stayed in the military, you probably would have become a Lieutenant

Colonel already."

"I am discharged as a major. Stop it. You are embarrassing me."

"Haha. Am I? By the way, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, you came here later than your usual hour. Are you living somewhere far from here?"

"Oh, there was a protest going on and that caused heavy traffic. They are protesting against Four Major Rivers Project."

"Four Major Rivers Project..."

Chairman Lee retrieved his fishing rod and attached new bait while mumbling.

"There will be people who make money from it."

"I'm sorry?"

"No, nothing. I'm just talking to myself. What about your friend? Didn't he come with you?"

"He couldn't make it. He has been very busy at work lately."

"That's right. People who are employed can't go fishing on weekdays like today."

Chairman Lee pulled in a fish. There was a carp flapping.

"I like the feeling of pulling in a carp."

Manager Gweon sitting next to Chairman Lee was pulling in a fish as well. The fish he pulled in looked weird like a catfish.

"Fish is biting today."

Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon attached new bait.

Gun-Ho didn't leave to his spot but stayed there because he wanted to learn from Chairman Lee, not about fishing, but about making money. Chairman Lee started talking.

"So, are you going to be a real estate investor while learning auction?"

"I don't have enough seed money yet. I'm doing stock day trading right now."

"Stocks? I don't recommend it. You don't know the other player's card. You can't even trust the rumors from Yeouido stock street. It's very risky."

"Haha, you are right. I'm losing right now. The good thing is I haven't invested much in stocks yet. I just tried a little for fun."

"I think I mentioned this to you earlier. If you can't be sure, then do not invest your money in it. You don't lose just money but you could risk your life."

"Huh?"

"Manager Gweon here, he lost all he had by investing in stocks. After he was discharged from the military, he started stocks. He lost his home and his health was seriously impaired at the time."

Manager Gweon scratched his head in embarrassment.

"He was lucky to have a wise wife who could save him, right?"

Manager Gweon nodded his head, implying his agreement with Chairman Lee.

"By the way, Chairman Lee. You mentioned earlier that there would be people who would make money right after I told you about the protest against Four Major Rivers Project. What did you mean by that?"

Chairman Lee turned his head to look at Gun-Ho and he smiled.

"How do I know for sure? I'm just speculating."

"What sort of speculation?"

Manager Gweon seemed to be curious as well, and he looked at Chairman Lee's face.

"Do you think Myung-Bak Lee will be elected?"

"I've heard he will be more likely elected."

"If so, would he start the Four Major Rivers Project?"

"Umm... I think he would since it is his campaign promise."

"If so, who would benefit the most from the project?"

"Well... hmm..."

"The answer is right there. If you can be certain that he would be elected."

Gun-Ho felt like he has been hit on the head with a hammer. However, he was still skeptical.

"He might not be elected, right? There are a lot of variable factors that play in the election."

"That's the thing. The difference between a wise man and a stupid man is whether he could read the other player's card."

"Oh, I see."

"A person who makes money knows how to grab an opportunity even during the confusing and depressing times. Even during a war or during the IMF crisis, there is someone who makes money while most people are going through a difficult time."

It became quiet for a moment before Gun-Ho got up to leave.

"Thank you for your advice, Chairman Lee. I will go to my spot for fishing now."

"When you try to catch fish, try to catch your mind as well. Haha"

"Thank you again."

Gun-Ho learned another wisdom from Chairman Lee that day.

Once Gun-Ho came back home, he started thinking.

"When I decided to invest in QM Steel, I wasn't sure about their business. I just like things I see on the chart and invested."

The next day, an official announcement about QM Steel appeared. It said they

decided to delist the company. In various stock discussion forums, people were blaming the president and management of QM Steel. Gun-Ho felt somewhat calm.

"Someone who had inside information raised the stock price right before the investigation, and then they abandoned it. I couldn't possibly know that... because I am one of the little people."

Gun-Ho smiled bitterly.

"This is the result of my thoughtlessness. I should have seen the real thing that drives the company, not the symptoms of it."

A week was given to sell stocks of QM Steel. Even during this period, speculators tried everything they could to make money. The price kept going up and down by the manipulators.

"Some people still make money during this final sale period. Wow."

Since Gun-Ho had no information at all, he just put his stocks at the current market price. He made 3,000,000 won after investing 30,000,000 won.

"There could be someone who would commit suicide if that person borrowed money to invest in QM Steel."

Gun-Ho stopped monitoring stock charts and wanted to get some fresh air. He went to Gyeongridan Street in Itaewon to see his friend, Suk-Ho.

"Suk-Ho Lee! It has been a while. How are things going with you?"

"Oh, Gun-Ho. You came back from China. Let's have a drink. Have a seat here."

"Come over and join me."

"How are you? Did you start something already?"

"Not yet. I'm just learning the real estate auction thing."

"Really? Oh, do you remember Min-Ho Kang?"

"Min-Ho Kang? Oh, oh, I remember. He spoke English very well!"

"Right. He used to receive an award in an English oratorical contest. He is coming to the bar later today. Why don't you meet him with me?"

"What is he doing?"

"After graduating from Chung-Ang University, he joined a civic organization."

"A civil organization?"

"I think he is interested in politics."

"Oh, really? He was very smart in high school. I knew he would do something brilliant."

< Five things needed in order to become rich, which was mentioned by Professor Wang in Chapter 67 >

1. Being born into a rich family.
2. Marrying someone who is rich.
3. Winning a lottery.
4. Starting a business.
5. Saving money.

Number 1 is not applicable to a person already born to a poor family.

Number 2 is hard to achieve.

The odds to win a lottery as Number 3 indicated is 1/1,000,000.

For Number 4, you need a good business item or money to start and maintain.

Number 5 is applicable to only the people with high salary occupations such as a medical doctor, a lawyer, an executive in a big company, a celebrity, etc.

Therefore, it's extremely hard for a person born to a poor family to become rich.

Poverty is inherited. However, there is always an exception. Sometimes, there is someone who was born to a poor family that becomes rich. Let's hope for the best.

72 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 1 – PART 1

Min-Ho Kang came into Suk-Ho's bar. He was with a woman who was wearing glasses.

"Hey, Min-Ho. Do you remember Gun-Ho Goo?"

Min-Ho looked at Gun-Ho.

"Oh, Gun-Ho. It has been a while."

Min-Ho extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake, but he didn't ask Gun-Ho what he was doing for a living.

Min-Ho was one of the popular kids in high school while Gun-Ho was an invisible boy who was always sitting at the back of the classroom. Gun-Ho in high school was a mediocre student in a poor family.

Whenever the students in the class chipped in to buy a snack or a meal, Gun-Ho would always go outside the classroom quietly because he didn't have money to contribute. He always felt small because of money.

"This is Eun-Mi Song. She is a magazine journalist."

Min-Ho introduced the woman he came with to Suk-Ho.

"Are you coming from the protest against the Four Major Rivers Project again?"

"F*ckers! They are trying so hard to spend an astronomical amount of money to damage our environment. I am so worried about this country."

Suk-Ho brought some beers with snacks made of cabbage and squid which Suk-Ho was so proud of.

After everyone drank their beers at least once, Min-Ho looked at Gun-Ho and said,

"Gun-Ho Goo! Are you still living in that townhouse in Juan Town in Incheon?"

"Yeah, my parents are still there, but I live somewhere else."

"Our family already left Incheon and moved to Dangsan Town. So, what do you do for a living?"

Suk-Ho who was sitting next to Gun-Ho answered for him.

"Gun-Ho had a Korean restaurant business in China. He came back to Korea not long ago, and he is now learning about auction."

"Auction? That costs money. Do you have money for it?"

Min-Ho asked with a scornful look on his face.

"I don't have money but I thought it would be useful to know..."

Suk-Ho responded for Gun-Ho again while handing paper napkins to Min-Ho, Gun-Ho, and the lady whom Min-Ho was with.

"Auction is not just for people who have money for a direct investment. You can also get a job related to it if you know enough about it, right?"

"There are tons of con-artists in the auction field. They attract their victims with real estate development plan."

Min-Ho said while wiping the beer foam off his mouth with a napkin.

The journalist lady showed her interest when she heard the word—real estate development plan.

"I covered the topic last year. It is true that there are many people just like Seondal* in the field."

"That's right. There are some as*holes spreading rumors that the land's price around the four major rivers would go up considerably. They have no idea what kind of disaster we could create and pass on to the next generation with that project. F*ck! Journalist Eun-Mi Song! Let's drink!"

"Oh, by the way, did you go to college? What did you study?"

"Yeah, I went to a college in China—Zhejiang University."

"China? Many unqualified kids who failed to be admitted to universities in Korea go to college in China. There was an incident with Korean international students in China not long ago. They rode motorcycles so loudly that Chinese local people complained."

Gun-Ho smiled bitterly.

"Some do and some don't. There are way more Korean students who don't do that kind of things in China. There are very few students who ride a motorcycle there."

"Really? What do you think of the Four Major Rivers Project?"

"Well, I'm not sure. I don't know much about it."

The journalist lady started talking this time.

"We all have to pay attention to it. We have to prevent it from happening. It's not just damaging our environment; it will be a disaster."

The journalist gulped her beer. She took out a cigarette and started smoking.

Suk-Ho left the table when customers came into the bar, to serve them. There were now three people at Gun-Ho's table.

Once they became a bit drunk, Min-Ho and Eun-Mi started singing a song quietly while clenching their fists. It sounded like some sort of a protest song.

"You don't know this song? Let's sing it together!"

Min-Ho asked Gun-Ho to sing along, but Gun-Ho just smiled without singing. Gun-Ho didn't know the song. Gun-Ho didn't spend time in a college campus and had no idea about a protest song.

When Gun-Ho came back to his office-tel, he thought about the Four Major Rivers Project.

"The answer is up to whether Myung-Bak Lee would be elected or not. A wise

man or an expert like Chairman Lee should know about it, but I can't figure it out. I am so stuck in my own thoughts."

Gun-Ho closed his eyes.

"If Myung-Bak Lee ("MB") is elected, he will certainly start the Four Major Rivers Project. Real estate speculators are buying land in Yeosu City, Icheon City, and even in Chungju City. They seemed to bet on MB's election."

Gun-Ho walked to the window and looked down the street. The street was busy with cars.

"I don't know whether the project will help control the flood, secure water resources for farming and industrial use, or if it will damage the environment. I am not an expert in the field. My involvement here is whether I could use this controversial event as my opportunity to make money."

Gun-Ho decided to make a short trip to Yeosu City and Icheon City to just look around.

"Okay, let's go!"

Gun-Ho rented a Sonata and drove the Han Riverside road toward Misari from Yeongdeungpo District.

"Han River is quiet. It doesn't say anything. It's the people who make a fuss about the Four Major Rivers Project."

Han River served as a water source for 10,000,000 citizens in Seoul and 12,500,000 citizens in Gyeonggi Province. It was flowing quietly and peacefully.

"This river flowed yesterday, and it will continuously be flowing tomorrow."

Gun-Ho arrived at Yangsu Town after passing by Misari and going through Paldang Bridge.

"The scenery is amazing. Korea's nature is truly beautiful."

Gun-Ho drove down to Yeosu City along the river. There were many realtors' offices along the road with a banner saying 'Land.' There was another banner

saying 'We welcome Four Major Rivers Project,' and another banner saying 'Absolutely No to Four Major Rivers Project.'

"I see a lot of luxurious cars parked in front of the realtors' offices. There are certainly people here who are loaded with funds that wanted to buy land here."

Gun-Ho parked his car in front of a realtor's office. As soon as he parked the car, two men wearing a hat ran toward Gun-Ho.

"Did you come to see a land? Come to our office."

"No, come to our office."

The two men grabbed each of Gun-Ho's arms. Gun-Ho laughed and went to the office closest to him. In the realtor's office, a man in his 50s was explaining something to three women who were sitting on a chair. He was using a large map hanging on the wall; he was pointing at something on the map with a stick.

"Are you here to see a land?"

"Yes, I would just like to know the current price."

"Why don't you join us and sit next to the lady over there? I will explain to you."

One of the ladies moved to the side to give a space for Gun-Ho to sit.

"Have a seat. Manager Kim, please bring a cup of tea for this gentleman."

Gun-Ho was sort of pushed to the seat and started listening to the man.

"This is the flow of the southern part of Han River. A weir will be built right here. This part is a greenbelt land and a military zone so no one can touch it. However, this part right here just came out on the market."

The man said in a low voice,

"If you buy this land now, the price will go up twice once MB is elected as our president. In that respect, you people sitting here right now are very lucky. You don't need to think twice, just grab it. This is indeed the opportunity of a lifetime."

Note*

Seondal – A famous swindler in Korea.

73 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 1 – PART 2

Once the realtor finished his sales pitch, a lady asked a question.

"How much is it per pyung?"

"It's 1 million won per pyung. That's the price if you buy now. After a few days, the price will go up."

"You said it is a farmland. It's very expensive for a farmland."

"Look at the area. The way the land is used can be changed. Do you know what would happen once this land is reclassified? I don't think you know."

"What would happen?"

The ladies swallowed their saliva.

"Since it is a riverside area, you can build a motel or a beautiful café. You can rent it out and let it generate income for your retirement."

The three women blinked their eyes. It seemed like they were picturing a cozy café or a motel on the land inside their heads.

Ordinary people seemed to be very interested in the riverside land.

The realtor's office was busy answering phone calls.

"Whether there is a land on the market? Not yet. There is one but someone is talking with our realtor about the land right now."

"A land on the market? Why don't you come and consult our realtor? I am with a client right now and I gotta go."

The ladies were discussing about the land.

"Did you see all the phone calls we are receiving right now? The land that's available today might not be available tomorrow."

"I am a resident of Seoul. Is it possible for me to buy a farmland here? I was told that in order to buy a farmland, I have to submit some kind of plan for the use of the land."

"You don't have to worry about it. If you make a provisional contract for the land today, I will explain everything to you about it."

"How much do you require for a provisional contract?"

"As you know, for a contract, 10% of the land's price is required. However, I can't ask the landowner to come to the office right now to make the contract, so 10 million won will do for now. And the land will be on hold for you."

"Okay then, we will take all those three lots."

The ladies were probably wealthy. They looked generous and merciful like Buddha. Moreover, they seemed to be benevolent just like Liu Bei in the Chinese historical novel, Romance of the Three Kingdoms. One lady opened her designer bag and pulled out checks.

The realtor looked at Gun-Ho.

"I can give you a call once another land appears on the market. Leave your business card with me."

"I don't have a business card."

A frown appeared on his forehead when Gun-Ho said he didn't have a business card. He handed a piece of paper to Gun-Ho and said,

"You can leave your number here."

Gun-Ho thought he could get a lot of spam calls once he gave his number to him, but he couldn't tell him he didn't want to leave his number. After he left his number with the realtor, Gun-Ho walked out of the office.

"Those ladies will eagerly look forward to MB's election. If their husbands are

either a university professor, a pastor or are working in the media, their husbands will try so hard to have MB get elected. Those civic organizations that are opposing the Four Major Rivers Project, Min-Ho Kang and the female journalist, can they beat those people?

Gun-Ho thought about these things while driving back to Seoul.

After his trip to Yeosu City, Gun-Ho thought about the Four Major Rivers Project all day long every single day.

The wallpaper pattern on the ceiling looked like a flowing river. He once dreamed about a field of reeds around the four rivers. Gun-Ho opened an early morning newspaper.

"The Four Major Rivers Project is hitting the news every day. The newspaper is covered with it."

Gun-Ho read every single news and articles on the newspaper meticulously. After he was done with the newspaper, he started thinking again.

"Those ladies who bought the riverside land in Yeosu City probably have rich husbands, so they can just go around and shop for lands like a hobby or something. But I can't. Not just yet."

One of the reasons why Gun-Ho couldn't easily decide to acquire a land now was that he couldn't afford to have his money tied up in a land. Unless he had a job or a business that generated income, he wouldn't be able to use a significant amount of his money into a long-term investment like the ladies did—who bought the land in Yeosu.

"Then what should I do?"

Gun-Ho walked around in his room with his arms crossed.

He couldn't come up with any good ideas. He thought of the weir that the realtor mentioned. A weir is a barrier built to control the flow of the river's water.

"Building a weir in a stream should not be so difficult while building a weir in a river with a strong current would involve a large scale construction and it takes a long time to complete."

Gun-Ho thought of what Chairman Lee told him about the Four Major Rivers Project earlier.

"Do you think MB will be elected? If so, will he do the Four Major Rivers Project? If so, who would benefit the most from the project?"

Gun-Ho walked around again in his room with his arms crossed.

"The first beneficiary must be the landowners around the river, and... Oh, my gosh!"

An idea flashed across Gun-Ho's mind. A light bulb went on over his head.

"That's it! It's dredging construction!"

Gun-Ho went over on what Chairman Lee said about Major Rivers Project once again.

'Do you think MB will be elected?'

"He will likely be elected. The economy was not doing well right now, so the electorate was leaning toward MB who used to be a CEO of a big company. Their hopes were high. Additionally, his opponent—Dong-Young Jeong—was not very popular."

'If so, will he deliver on the Four Major Rivers Project promise?'

"He will certainly do it. He had a good experience with his previous renewal project with Cheonggyecheon. It was a success, so he will definitely do it again without hesitation."

'If so, who would benefit the most from the project?'

"It will be the landowner around the four rivers, and the people who will participate in the project—the construction companies. He wouldn't select Hyundai Construction for the project though because he once worked there so the public will suspect the connection between the two. I should put aside those big construction companies. Mid-sized construction companies will be selected. Which one of those has experience with dredging construction or industrial plant construction?"

He narrowed down the list of construction companies that would be possibly selected to participate in the Four Major Rivers Project to those mid-size companies with experience of dredging or industrial plant construction. Gun-Ho started searching on the Internet.

"Investing in real estate is a good option for me, but investing in stocks related to the project is good as well. The people who have money make more money. I have more than 1.1 billion won. I don't want my money tied up in a real estate. Stocks can be easily liquidated, so investing in stocks is a better option for me. If I use my 1.1 billion won in investing in stocks, I can easily recover the loss incurred by my earlier QM Steel stock investment."

Gun-Ho started searching on the Internet enthusiastically.

"I have to find the construction companies who will likely participate in the Four Major Rivers Project!"

He was already late.

Two strong KOSDAQ registered candidates—EE-HWA Construction and Samok-Jeong Company—became popular already among little investors. (Sammok-Jeong Company is now Sammok S-Form)

EE-HWA Construction was an industrial plant construction company, and Sammok-Jeong Company manufactured construction molding.

"Sh*t, these people are so quick. EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company were not this popular before."

Gun-Ho observed the trading volume of those two companies' stocks and verified whether foreigners and institutional investors purchased their stocks.

"The trading volume has been increasing, and their stock prices are above the 20-day moving average! Should I get in now? There is still time until the presidential election."

Gun-Ho sighed and mumbled while closing his eyes. He then looked into a blank space. He could only think of EE-HWA Construction and Samok-Jeong Company right now. He didn't even hear the delivery man who was ringing the doorbell of his office-tel.

74 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made his decision.

He transferred his 1.1 billion won from his Kookmin Bank account to his stock account.

"I now see the other player's cards."

Gun-Ho started purchasing EE-HWA Construction stocks from 10 AM that day.

"Its stock price was 900 won and now it is over 1,000 won. Only God knows whether the price reached its peak or would increase more. I have six more months until the presidential election. I bet it will keep going up until then."

Gun-Ho had been sitting in front of the computer monitor and purchasing stocks. Around 3 PM, Gun-Ho verified his stock account to see how many shares he now had and how much their market values were.

"EE-HWA Construction 300 million won, and Samok-Jeong Company 50 million won. Let's stop right here for today."

Gun-Ho calculated how much he could earn if he would sell his shares now.

"The stock price hasn't increased and the selling will incur 1,200,000 won for stock trading fees. So the net result will be -1,200,000 won. It's not bad."

Gun-Ho spent 350 million won today in purchasing stocks. If he would sell these stocks, he would have to pay trading fees of 1.2 million won, so it would be a loss for him.

"Hmm, I didn't have breakfast and lunch today."

The next day, Gun-Ho skipped his lunch again and logged into the stock trading website and placed offers to buy the same stocks.

"The stock candlestick is showing that the stock price has declined. The loss from the amount I invested yesterday is over 5 million won. I will do 'averaging down' to bring down the average cost."

Gun-Ho invested 400 million won more in stocks that day.

Gun-Ho took a break on the third day.

The stock market became slow.

"I might have to stay invested longer-term with this stock to make money. Did I make a mistake by investing in this stock?"

Gun-Ho believed the price of stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project would keep fluctuating until the presidential election.

Gun-Ho spent one week to invest all his 1.1 billion won in the stocks: 70% of EE-HWA Construction and 30% of Sammok-Jeong Company.

"Let's not swing between hopes and fears every day because of its constant price fluctuation. The presidential election will be held in December. I will stay in the library reading books by then!"

Gun-Ho looked himself in the mirror. He seemed to age rapidly during the past week. His eyes were sunken and he could see dark circles under his eyes.

"I skipped meals and ate only lomein for a week... that's why."

He spent most of his time in the National Assembly Library of Korea reading books. He usually picked the books related to economics or management: Power Shift, Revolutionary Wealth, Currency Wars, and 7 Habits of the Rich. He also enjoyed the books like How to Bid at Auction, Buy Land Even With Debt, Choice China Made, etc.

"Success or failure."

Gun-Ho was lost in thought while walking in the square in front of the National Assembly Building in Yeouido Island.

"This is certainly a good hand as long as there is no variable."

Gun-Ho was dying to know whether his stock's price dived up or down.

"What if it went up or down? So what? If it went down I would feel really bad, and if it went up, I would desperately want to sell. I have to wait until the presidential election day. Those who bought stock on credit or with a loan would get antsy. I am different. I invested in stock with certainty. I should be calm."

Gun-Ho considered those people a fool, who invested in stock with a loan or on credit, especially those people who invested everything they had.

"I bought the QM Steel stock for 30 million won last time and sold it at 3 million won. What if that 30 million won was all I had and it was also a loan? I would obviously have become a person with bad credit."

Gun-Ho imagined himself still working in a factory and borrowing 30 million won to invest in the QM Steel stock and losing most of it. He thought he wouldn't have wanted to continue his life any longer and he might have committed suicide if that happened.

"Investing in the stock market is a very dangerous activity. That's why Chairman Lee said I shouldn't invest in the stock market unless I am certain."

Gun-Ho thought Chairman Lee had wise eyes.

"He might not have a high academic degree, but his attitude toward the society is extraordinary. His eyes resemble Byung-Chul Lee's eyes—the founder of Samsung that I saw in a picture."

When he had invested in the stock market while he was working in a factory, he wanted to check the market every single hour, literally. He couldn't concentrate on his work at the factory and he once hurt his hand while handling an injection molding machine.

He could feel calm this time because he didn't have any debt and he invested 1.1 billion won. Even if the stock price dived down to half of its price, he would still have 550 million won in hand.

Gun-Ho was still walking in the square in front of the National Assembly Building when someone called his name behind his back.

"Are you Gun-Ho Goo?"

It was Min-Hyeok Kim, Gun-Ho's hometown friend; Gun-Ho went to the same elementary school with him and he hung out with him until his junior high even though they didn't go to the same junior high school.

"Oh, Min-Hyeok. What are you doing here?"

"I saw you at the library earlier, but I was not sure if it was really you. You gained some weight but you didn't change much. What do you do?"

"Nothing. I'm unemployed. What do you do?"

"I used to work in an office, but now I am studying for an exam to get a level-7 government job."

"Really? Why did you quit your job?"

"Whew, I couldn't see my future with that job. I think a government job is the best in this country. I used to work in a quality assurance department in a mid-size company. I had to work till late at night all the time and couldn't see myself growing there."

"I see. The level-7 exam is hard to pass, right? Why don't you try the level-9 exam instead?"

"I am actually preparing for both."

"You should have started earlier. It's kind of late to start at our age."

"I know, but if I can get a government job then it's still good. The problem is that it's not easy to pass the exam. It's really stressful. Haha."

"You will be fine. You went to Kookmin University, didn't you? I think you will pass."

"Thank you for saying that. Why do you stay unemployed? I thought I heard you were working somewhere."

"I had a business in China and came back to Korea not long ago. I am still

thinking about what I want to do."

"Oh, I see. Give me your number. I still live in Bucheon. Here is my number."

"Thank you. Call me once you pass the exam!"

Gun-Ho gazed at Min-Hyeok's back blankly.

"I hope he can pass the exam. If I remember correctly, his father is a bus driver. I guess he is trying so hard to get out of the inherited poverty. Going for the government job exam is maybe the right choice for him. People say that if you pass the level-9 government job exam you can be proud of yourself, and if you pass the level-7, then your family will be proud of you. Haha."

Gun-Ho let out a sigh and smiled bitterly.

Gun-Ho continued walking in the square.

"What if MB is not elected?"

Gun-Ho shook his head thinking he would be elected for sure.

"What if MB dies of an accident? I read from some book that when one of our former presidents, Syngman Rhee was a presidential candidate, the two opposing presidential candidates—Dr. Byeong-Wook Jo and Dr. Ik-Hee Shin died unexpectedly while running for president."

Gun-Ho found himself staggering at the thought of the possibility of MB's sudden death.

"I need more training in controlling my mind. It has been only a week since I bought the stocks, and I am already feeling anxious."

Gun-Ho couldn't concentrate on books at the library because he was distracted by all sorts of what-if thoughts.

"I can't go on like this. Let's go on a trip abroad. I will go to Japan."

75 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho decided to take a short trip to Tokyo, Japan for three nights and four days.

"I've never been in Japan. Let's visit Tokyo and see how Japanese people make their life and also get some idea about my next business item."

Gun-Ho stopped by a travel agency. The agency recommended him a trip package that included a Tokyo city tour and a visit to a small city, Nikko which was famous for hot springs.

"Okay, I will take it."

Gun-Ho wanted to forget about things going on in his head and reserved a flight ticket to Japan right away.

Gun-Ho was still anxious while he was in Japan.

He couldn't pay attention to the tour guide, but all he could think of was his stock price.

He followed his tour group to Meiji Jingu Gaien in Shibuya, where his hotel was located. He still couldn't enjoy the tour; he was still thinking about his stocks.

"I invested 1.1 billion won. Am I going to succeed or fail in this investment?"

While he was lost in thought, Gun-Ho realized that an old couple kept glancing at him.

"If I had 10 billion won, I wouldn't be this nervous about the 1.1 billion won investment. However, 1.1 billion won is all I have right now. Of course, I am anxious. I invested all I have."

Gun-Ho felt anxious and he looked around. The old man of the old couple came to Gun-Ho with a smile and asked,

"Young man, how come are you traveling by yourself? Don't you have a girlfriend?"

"Haha, no, I don't."

"What have you done so far then without getting a girlfriend? In the old times, you could have your own children already at your age."

A nosy old man, Gun-Ho thought. The old man's wife seemed to feel sorry for Gun-Ho because she seemed to know how nosy her husband could be. She kept dragging the old man's arm toward her. There were many old couples in the tour group. Some women's group was there as well. Gun-Ho was the only young man in the tour group.

"I see several young ladies here. Why don't you ask one of them out?"

"Haha, I will pass, sir."

The old man talked to Gun-Ho again when the group went to a shopping mall, Shibuya109.

"You should buy something and distribute it among your female friends. That's one of the ways to get a girlfriend."

Gun-Ho thought that while he couldn't think of anything else but his stocks, this old man's head is filled with girlfriend thing.

The following day, the group continued to Nikko. Gun-Ho was looking outside the window enjoying the view in the tour bus heading to Nikko when the old man came and sat next to him; he was holding some food.

Gun-Ho thought this old man could be very tiresome.

"Try this. It's mochi; we bought them on the street in Shibuya. It's tasty."

"Thank you. I will try one. Sir, which presidential candidate do you think will be elected?"

"Myung-Bak of course. Dong-Young Jeong is too weak."

"Why do you say that?"

"Our current president Moo-Hyun Roh hasn't done anything good for our economy. On the other hand, Myung-Bak Lee used to work as a CEO of a big company. I believe he will make our economy much better. Don't you think so, young man?"

"I agree with you, sir. Thank you for the mochi."

Gun-Ho continued to look outside the window; otherwise, he thought the old man would keep talking to him.

The tour group arrived at Nikko Toshogu. The tourists were busy taking pictures.

"Oh! Look at that monkey sculpture."

There was a three-lady group; they seemed to be colleagues in an office. One of them came to Gun-Ho and asked him to take a picture of them.

"Did you come by yourself?"

They asked Gun-Ho and laughed.

Gun-Ho didn't say anything while feeling embarrassed.

"Is this your rebound trip?"

One of them said, and the three ladies started laughing again.

"Sh*t, I feel so embarrassed that I can't enjoy my trip anymore."

Gun-Ho talked to himself.

"Sir, what do you do for a living?"

"Sir?"

Gun-Ho was baffled when those young ladies called him sir. Well, Gun-Ho was already 35 years old, maybe he was old enough to be called sir in those young ladies' eyes.

"I am a survey researcher. Who do you think will be elected in the presidential election this year?"

"Kyung-Young Huh."

Those ladies started laughing again.

"Don't you think the candidate, Dong-Young Jeong would win for the presidential election?"

"Nah... Myung-Bak Lee will win. Girls, let's go. The tour guide is calling us. Hurry up."

Gun-Ho felt a sense of relief after hearing people say MB would be elected.

"Okay. I'm betting on the winning side."

Gun-Ho came back to Korea, and the first thing he did was checking his stock price.

They increased by 5%.

"Little people seemed to constantly buy the stocks, but it's slow."

Gun-Ho felt too nervous and bored to wait for the stock price hike. He decided to rent a car and travel around Korea.

"I haven't been in a lot of places in Korea."

Gun-Ho came back home after visiting Jeolla Province, Gyeongsang Province, Chungcheong Province, and Gangwon Province. And he checked the stock price. Not much changed.

Gun-Ho thought that maybe he should start working. It was hard to get a decent office job in Korea, but he could easily find a manual labor job. He started working in a distribution center in Deuksan Town. His job was a night job loading and unloading trucks with heavy packages. Time would fly and he would feel too busy to think of his stocks.

The work was hard. He didn't even have time to go to the bathroom. The

workers there looked poor and hungry. Gun-Ho could see himself a few years ago.

"You don't look like you belong here. Why don't you learn some skills and get a better job?"

A man in his 50s who was working the same job with Gun-Ho talked to him.

"Every job is equally valuable. This is fine as long as I get paid."

"If you do this kind of manual work for a long time, it would cause a physical pain here and there in your body."

The work was indeed hard. Gun-Ho already felt pain in his waist. His arms felt tender.

"You shouldn't lift a heavy box with your waist like that. You should straighten your waist and use your knee to lift the box."

Gun-Ho was being paid about 1,500,000 won per month for the manual labor work at night. He sweated heavily every night and he had to apply pain relief patches on his shoulders and waist to make 1.5 million won per month; it was too little for the pain he had to suffer.

"You can't be rich by doing a manual labor work job. You have to either get a profession after studying a lot, or you have to be born to rich parents so your life starting point is different from most people."

Since it was a night job, Gun-Ho didn't have to worry about encountering someone he knew while he was working. Gun-Ho was working there to kill time while waiting for a desirable outcome of his 1.1 billion won stock investment. Gun-Ho thought that the others who were working there to support their family would never get out of their poverty.

"Maybe that's why many young people these days decided not to have children. They barely make a living for themselves."

Another good thing about working there was that he could have a good sleep during the day since the work at night exhausted him enough to make him pass out during the day. He continued this life for two months and he didn't think of

stocks during the two months.

Autumn was almost gone and Cosmos flowers were falling down.

One day, Gun-Ho got up around lunchtime after working late at night and he was reading an economic newspaper when he was stunned.

[Warning! EE-HWA Construction stock hike]

It was about EE-Hwa Construction stock. It said that the Korea Exchange (KRX) observed an unusual stock price hike on EE-Hwa Construction and warned investors about the specific stock.

If a stock price goes up by 60% during the past five days, Korea Exchange warns investors and temporarily halts trading for one day in order to prevent damage on investors.

"I made it!"

Gun-Ho immediately opened his stock account.

"If I sell it now, my net account value will be 1.76 billion won!"

By investing 1.1 billion won, Gun-Ho made 660 million won.

"Nicely done. It's enough. Let's sell it."

Gun-Ho decided to sell it the next day once the Korea Exchange's temporary trading halts on the stock would be lifted.

Gun-Ho, let the distribution center know that he would quit the job.

"We like working with you. Why are you quitting? I was talking with the team leader to raise your pay. We will raise it to 1,700,000 won."

"Haha, thank you, but I already found another job."

Gun-Ho wanted to scream to the distribution center staff that 'Hey, I am a man with 1.76 billion won.' Actually, Gun-Ho wanted to scream it to the world.

76 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho sat at his desk in front of his computer to sell his stocks.

"Maybe it's too early. I still have three months until the presidential election. Let's wait a little bit more."

"Maybe I should sell now. The stock price might drop soon. Who knows? I'd better sell them now while I could still make money."

Gun-Ho put his hands on the computer keyboard and retrieved his hands off the keyboard repeatedly.

Once the one-day trading curb on EE-HWA Construction stock was lifted, its price started increasing again without a hitch. Sammok-Jeong Company's stock received the same warning as EE-HWA Construction from Korea Exchange.

The presidential election campaign was heating up as the election neared. The stock market was fluctuating abnormally. The presidential candidate, Myung-Bak Lee continuously promoted the Four Major Rivers Project drastically while the opposing candidate, Dong-Young Jeong fiercely attacked the project by asserting that it would cause a disaster in this country. The stock price related to the Four Major Rivers Project kept fluctuating in an unusual pattern.

Gun-Ho felt great about his stock's price which kept increasing, but the abnormal movement of the price scared him as well.

"The stock market is going crazy. The country is going crazy."

The next day and the following day, the stock price of EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company continued increasing dramatically.

The media covered the abnormal activity of certain stocks including the stocks of EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company. It said that people kept irresponsibly investing in these stocks without knowing the necessary

information about the companies. The stock prices kept going up regardless of what they said.

Circuit breakers were triggered in an effort to calm the overheated stock market.

"Whew, let's take a break."

Gun-Ho opened his stock account. His stock value exceeded 6 billion won. Gun-Ho shivered, and he was having goosebumps. The stock money didn't seem to increase much in the beginning, but once it passes a certain amount it goes up exponentially; it was like a snowball.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Min-Ho who he met at Suk-Ho's bar in Gyeongridan Street the other day.

"Gun-Ho? How are you doing? Did you find a job?"

"No, not yet."

"Then come and meet me at Gwanghwamun Gate tomorrow."

"For what?"

"We are having a large-scale protest tomorrow against the Four Major Rivers Project. Many civic organizations will join us. You should come too."

"I don't know..."

"What are you talking about? You should come if you worry about this country! That project will be a disaster. If you are a true Korean, you should come!"

"I think... that project could benefit us. It can help prevent a flood."

"Ha, you dumb idiot! Because of people like you, a pseudo like MB could get power. Do you know why I am doing all these? I'm not doing this for money because I am not making any by protesting. But I do this for our posterity. Come tomorrow. I won't take no for an answer!"

"I think I gotta do something tomorrow."

"Do what? Is it more important than preventing disasters? Why can't you see it?"

We are breathing the same air under the same sky. That's why you don't have a job yet. We have to stop MB's election. The candidate, Dong-Young Jeong must win."

Gun-Ho suppressed his desire to say 'I want MB to win.'

"Why don't you say anything? You are coming tomorrow, right?"

"Okay."

After getting off the phone with Min-Ho, Gun-Ho talked to himself.

"I don't know whether the Four Major Rivers Project would bring a benefit or a disaster to the country. I don't know which candidate among Myung-Bak Lee or Dong-Young Jeong has to win for this country. I am just a stock investor. I have to make money. You have no idea how I had lived my life when I had no money. You have no idea how terribly I had to suffer all these years just because I didn't have money. I must make money. I know you still look down on me from the bottom of your heart."

Gun-Ho clenched his fist and hit the wall with it.

"I will make money!"

It made a loud noise and Gun-Ho's fist got swollen right away.

Gun-Ho stayed in his office-ten staring at the computer monitor all day long. He didn't even go out. Timing was very important in stocks. The stocks that keep going up abnormally in price like the ones Gun-Ho had, could drop in price in any minute if a group of investors who influence the price decided to sell them.

"Unless I get solid red candlestick, I will keep these stocks!"

Gun-Ho purchased one more computer and monitored the stock market using two computers. He kept the one-minute charts, candlestick charts, and tick charts open on his computer screens and kept observing their movements. When his eyes became blurry, Gun-Ho looked at his eyes in the mirror.

"My eyes are very red. I think the blood vessels in my eyes had burst."

Gun-Ho rubbed his eyes and waited till 3 PM when the stock market closed before he went to see an eye doctor. The eye doctor examined Gun-Ho's eyes and said,

"You should let your eyes rest. Do not use your computer or read books for a while. All the blood vessels in your eyes had burst."

While he was receiving an electric thermal eye treatment in the eye doctor's office, he still thought about his stocks.

"I don't have time for this. The stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project are still on the rise."

As soon as he came back to his office-tel, he turned on his computers.

"I know the doctor said I shouldn't use a computer for a while, but it should be okay. I won't lose my sight by this."

Gun-Ho looked at the stocks charts on EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company.

"The price has been rising so steeply. I guess it could go over 20,000 won per share. I wonder how many people who are holding this stock bought them at the bottom price as I did."

Newspapers warned the investors about the stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project. They said the price of those stocks was already too high, and that buying those stocks right now was suicidal. Despite the warnings from media, the price of those stocks continued to increase for the next several days.

"Those people who invested in these stocks will face the same fate as MB."

Gun-Ho stayed in his office-tel and didn't even bother to shop for groceries or go to a restaurant to eat. He just ate what he had in his refrigerator—rice, kimchi, and pickled radish. He couldn't take his eyes off the stock charts because the price might start going downwards.

"For stocks like this, if some people start to throw out their stocks for some reason, the rest of those people will follow them by selling their stocks without hesitation. So I have to closely watch its movement. A solid red candlestick can

appear within five minutes. Once that happens, I will start losing my money rapidly."

Gun-Ho stared at the computer monitors while putting prescription eye drops in his eyes.

He sometimes laid down on his bed because of the pain in his eyes. He was laying down on his bed to rest his eyes when he heard the news on the TV. He usually kept his TV on even though he didn't really watch it. There was a big accident in the sea near the Taeon coastal town. A ship collided with an oil vessel, and it caused the oil to spill into the sea.

Gun-Ho jumped out of the bed.

"What? Oil spill into the ocean? A big accident? A river can be subject to this type of accident, and oil can be spilled in a river. This will adversely affect the stock price related to the Four Major Rivers Project!"

Gun-Ho was certain that people would start selling their stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project tomorrow morning. The stock price increased a lot, and those people already made money. They wouldn't risk the money they already made from stocks to make more money.

"They will begin selling their stocks during pre-market trading sessions."

Gun-Ho believed that the people with the stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project would start selling their stocks before the regular trading hours at 8:30 AM. The regular trading hours started at 9 AM.

Gun-Ho couldn't sleep worrying that he might oversleep and miss the 8:30 AM pre-market trading hours. If that happened, he would lose all the money he invested in stocks.

"If a lot of people sell their stocks, it will cause a downward price movement, and there will be no buyer for a few days then. I wouldn't be able to sell my stocks for a few days and the price will continuously drop!"

Gun-Ho didn't sleep that night and endured the pain in his eyes. It was a long night. He spent the night dozing off in his chair and woke up repeatedly.

In the morning, Gun-Ho turned on his computer.

"It's 8:30 AM."

He was right. As soon as the pre-market trading session opened, the stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project poured into the market. It was a heated moment.

Gun-Ho started selling his stocks frantically. He had so many shares and his offering price was going down. The stock price of EE-HWA Construction was once 25,000 won per share and it went down to 24,000 won and then to 23,000 won.

"Sh*t. I pressed the wrong key on the keyboard. I'm modifying the offer!"

Gun-Ho sometimes pressed a wrong key. The speed that other people were selling their stocks was faster than a cooling fan's speed. Once Gun-Ho was done selling all his stocks of EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company, those stock prices started moving downward.

Gun-Ho screamed in pain. His eyes hurt a lot. He covered his eyes with his palm and opened his net account value window.

"The balance is 19.8 billion won! The number of stocks is 0."

Gun-Ho invested 1.1 billion won and made 19.8 billion won.

"It's all done!"

He felt drained, and then he passed out on the floor. His computers were still on, and he was still wearing clothes.

77 Hit a Jackpot with Four Major Rivers Project 3 – PART 2

He woke up around 4 PM.

Gun-Ho ran to the bathroom and washed his face. He looked at his eyes in the mirror.

"I still have red eyes, but the pain is almost gone."

After sleeping for long hours, he didn't feel any pain in his eyes anymore. Once he started feeling relaxed, he felt hungry.

"I haven't had anything since yesterday."

Gun-Ho went to a Japanese restaurant near the Yeongdeungpo traditional market and ordered sushi. He ordered a bottle of liquor as well. It had been a while since he had liquor.

"19.8 billion won! My 19.8 billion won." He chuckled.

"You never know what would happen in your life. I always felt small because of money and now I have 19.8 billion won. Who would expect this kind of thing would happen to me."

Gun-Ho poured liquor in his glass.

"How much is 19.8 billion won? Say, I spend 10 million won every month for my living expenses, then I need 120 million won per year. That means I can go on like that for the next 165 years."

Gun-Ho decided to buy liquor to people he felt grateful to. And he wanted to buy a condo for his parents.

"My dearest friend, Jong-Suk. He hung out with me when I had no friends at all. I will buy him liquor big time. Suk-Ho from Gyeongridan Street. I didn't like that guy, but I was able to open a Vietnamese noodle soup restaurant in

Noryangjin and made money from China because of him. I will buy him liquor too. Let's see... who else... Sh*t! I do have such a small social network."

Gun-Ho ordered one more bottle of Cheongha*. A chef in a white chef uniform handed Cheongha to Gun-Ho; he looked concerned when he saw Gun-Ho's eyes and asked him,

"Are you okay, sir? Your left eye is swollen."

"Would you like to join me?"

Gun-Ho poured the clear-liquid Cheongha in a glass and handed it to the chef.

"Thank you."

The chef served a piece of tuna sushi to Gun-Ho in return after drinking the glass of Cheongha Gun-Ho handed to him.

Gun-Ho tried to think of anyone else who he felt grateful to while having his second bottle of Cheongha.

"That's right. Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town. I guess he is the one I should feel grateful the most. I don't think I should buy him liquor though considering his age. What about Master Park from Gangnam? Should I meet with him so I can thank him? He said I would become rich at the age of 35. I guess I should say he was right. I am 35 years old now and will stay 35 until December 31 which is around the corner. Yeah, I think I want to thank him for it."

Gun-Ho drank one more glass of Cheongha. He felt like he could drink more than the usual.

"It's not a good time to buy a condo for my parents since it's winter. I will tell them to get ready by the Lunar New Year's Day. The moving season starts right after it."

Gun-Ho decided to take enough time to think about what he wanted to do with his life.

"Since I am rich now, I should run a big company. I have work experience with

factories; should I run a factory?"

Gun-Ho walked around the street in Yeongdeungpo District after leaving the Japanese restaurant. The neon lights were shining on the street and Gun-Ho felt like they were blessing him.

The year changed.

The Small and Big Winter went by and the weather was getting warmer. Gun-Ho went to his parents' home. His eyes were fully recovered already by then.

"Huh? I thought you were coming for the Lunar New Year's Day."

Gun-Ho's mother welcomed his son. Her left eye was swollen and red like a strawberry. The condition of her eye looked more serious than Gun-Ho's when he had his blood vessels burst in his eyes. She seemed to have a hard time keeping her eye open.

"What's wrong with your eye, mom?"

"Oh, this? It's nothing."

Gun-Ho's father was in the bedroom, and he opened the door slightly to see Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho's niece was there having a meal.

"Gun-Ho? I can't get up to see you, son, because of the pain I have in my waist. Someone hit your mom's eye."

"Somebody hit her?"

"Yeah, while she was working at the nursing home, an old man with dementia hit her."

"Don't go there anymore, mom!"

"You can't blame an old man with dementia. He didn't know what he was doing."

"What about sister? Why is Jeong-Ah here without her mom?"

"Your sister is working these days, so she left Jeong-Ah here."

"Where is she working?"

"It's a factory producing paper cups. She's often late in coming home. Whew. Your sister and Jeong-Ah are having a hard time these days because of your brother-in-law."

"What about him?"

"He doesn't get enough work with his business, so he is doing some manual labor job lately. He shouldn't have started his own business. If he continued working at the factory he had used to work, he wouldn't have had to get a loan either. Whew."

Gun-Ho's mother cooked Doenjang-jjigae for Gun-Ho with her one eye open.

Gun-Ho had his meal with his mother's delicious Doenjang-jjigae, and then he asked his parents to sit with him.

"I have something I want to discuss with you."

"What is it? Why do you look so serious? Did you get a loan too? My chest feels like it's about to sink every time someone talked about debt."

"How far are we until the Lunar New Year's Day?"

"Twenty days left."

"After the Lunar New Year's Day, I will buy a condo for you. You need to put this apartment on the market for the next tenant."

"What are you talking about?"

Gun-Ho's parents looked at Gun-Ho; they had a skeptical look on their faces.

"Umm, do you remember I went to China earlier, right? I actually made some money from there. I will buy you a condo, so you don't have to pay the rent every month."

"We are happy with this place."

"I want to buy a condo in Seoul. Why don't you move to Seoul?"

"I don't like Seoul. We don't have friends there, and the people there are cold."

"What about Guweol Town then? Mom, you always said those people living in a condo in Guweol Town are lucky, and that they had probably lived a good life in their previous life. I can get a condo there close to the city hall. I can give you money to cover for your living expenses as well, so stop working in the nursing home."

"Are you out of your mind? Do you have any idea how much it cost to buy a condo there? It's 300 million won. Your aunt used to live there in a condo 30 pyung large. She now downsized it and moved to Jugong condo in Mansu Town."

"What about the new condo—Hillstate next to the city hall?"

"Stop being silly. Why don't you sleep here today and go home tomorrow?"

Gun-Ho's parents thought he was joking.

Gun-Ho raised his voice.

"I'm not kidding here. I do have money."

Gun-Ho's parents looked at Gun-Ho again with still a suspicious look in their eyes. When Gun-Ho looked at his mother's half-opened swollen eye again, his eyes welled up with tears.

"You have had a difficult life. Let me buy a condo for you."

His parents still looked at Gun-Ho without saying a word.

"I will let you know as soon as I've bought a condo for you. You can then place this apartment on the market. Since Jeong-Ah is here with you, I will get a 45 pyung large condo."

"Huh?"

Gun-Ho's father looked at Gun-Ho with his mouth open, and his mother came back to her senses and said,

"I can't believe any of this until you show us the title to the condo. Only rich people are living in a 45 pyung condo in Incheon. It will cost well over 400 million won. Moreover, even if you have money to buy a condo like that, we can't live there. You should cut your coat according to your cloth. The maintenance fee of that large condo will cost you a lot."

"Haha, okay, mom. Just know that I will buy you a condo. I gotta go now. Thanks for the Doenjang-jjigae, mom."

As Gun-Ho stood up to leave, his mother and father stood up along with him. His father barely stood up though with his painful waist.

"Oh, mom, did you pay off the loan you had from the credit union?"

"Why are you asking? I am still paying the principal and interest. I guess I have about 6 million won left."

Gun-Ho pulled out an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"Before you move to a new place, pay off that loan with this. It's 10 million won. Use 6 million won to pay off the debt and use the remaining 4 million won to buy some restorative herbal medicine for you."

"10 million won?"

Gun-Ho's parents' eyes widened.

Right before MB got elected in the year 2007, the price of stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project increased dramatically. The price of EE-HWA Construction went up 30 times more, and the price of Sammok-Jeong Company went up over 15 times more. The stock market was overheated, and they became issues at that time.

If you are doing stocks, you can easily search the records of the history of those stocks on the Internet: EE-HWA Construction and Sammok-Jeong Company (it is now Sammok S-Form).

The stock's price hike at that time is a fact, but Gun-Ho's investment in those

stocks is a fiction.

Note*

Cheongha – one of Korean brand of a clear, refined rice wine.

78 Secret Bar at Hannam Town 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made a call to Jong-Suk.

"Hey Jong-Suk, how are you doing?"

"Oh, bro, what do you do these days?"

"This and that. I am keeping an eye on the real estate market and the stock market."

"Aren't you going to start your own business or get a job?"

"I don't think I want to work for someone any longer. After working as self-employed, I don't want to go back to the life punching clock for an employer."

"But you still should do something. Don't you think?"

"Oh, and I made some money lately. I want to buy you a drink."

"Really?"

"Yeah, really. When are you off from your work?"

"Let me see."

"Let's ask Suk-Ho in Gyeongridan Street to join us. You ask him. You are closer to him than I am."

"Oh, Suk-Ho bro. Sure. Let's then find out what day his bar is closed and we can have a drink there."

"That sounds great. You talk with him and let me know, okay?"

After getting off the phone with Jong-Suk, Gun-Ho received a call from someone he didn't know.

"Are you Mr. Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, this is he."

"I am calling from the stockbroking company. I am a branch manager. I'd like to invite you for a dinner."

Gun-Ho thought this could be tiresome. The broking firm that Gun-Ho was currently using was the same firm he had used when he worked at a factory in Hwaseong. He had put his money borrowed from the sunshine loan to that company for stock investment at that time. The branch was located in Suwon City.

"I will be out of country from tomorrow."

"Oh, you will? Then could we meet once you return to Korea?"

Gun-Ho currently had 19.8 billion won in his stock account with that stockbroking firm. Gun-Ho thought it was natural for them to be interested in him now.

Gun-Ho had used to work in several different factories. He knew how a mid-size firm could be. Even though a company seemed to be decent, many companies in that size had a capital less than 1 billion won. Many of them had their annual sales not exceeding 5 billion won.

Considering the fact above, the 19.8 billion won that Gun-Ho had was a huge amount of money. A branch of a stockbroking company would do everything they could not to lose a client with this much funds.

"I was going to move my account to another branch after I move to another area. It's going to be difficult to do that."

Gun-Ho then received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro? I just talked with Suk-Ho bro. He said Monday of the third week is good. His bar will be closed that day."

"Really? But you have to work on Monday, don't you?"

"It's okay. I can take that day off. I already told my manager that I would have to take that day off for personal reasons."

"Really? I will see you then."

Gun-Ho wanted to buy a drink for his friends in a more luxurious bar than Suk-Ho's bar.

Gun-Ho called Suk-Ho.

"I just talked with Jong-Suk. So, what time would be good on Monday?"

"Right. I will have to run errands in the morning; I have to go to the district office and tax office here. So, what about 5 PM?"

It was Monday; Gun-Ho, Jong-Suk, and Suk-Ho were supposed to meet for a drink.

Gun-Ho didn't have a car yet, so he took a taxi heading to Suk-Ho's bar.

The lights in the Suk-Ho's bar were off and all the chairs were placed on the tables. The front door was slightly open.

"Hey, bro. Come in!"

Jong-Suk was already there and he was having a beer with Suk-Ho.

"Hey, come and have a seat!"

"Did you guys already start drinking without me?"

"Have a drink, Gun-Ho. Suk-Ho came early so we started early."

"I was going to take you guys to a good place."

"Let's have a drink here first then go to a restaurant. I know a good one close to Hamilton Hotel in Itaewon Town."

Gun-Ho looked around the bar. The large picture of a musical instrument was still hanging on the wall. That reminded Gun-Ho of Suk-Ho's business partner who looked like an artist.

"How is your partner doing? Your friend from college. His name was Bang something and he looked like an artist."

"Oh, Han-Young Bang! He is not coming here anymore. He works at a room salon*."

"A room salon?"

"Yeah, his sister is a chief hostess there."

"You mean he is not your business partner of this bar anymore?"

"He is still holding the shares in this bar and I am sending half of the profits from this bar to him. He wants to pull out the funds he invested in this bar but I don't have money to buy him out."

"Hmm, I see."

"I want to go to that room salon he is working to contribute to their sales, but I don't know anyone who could afford to drink there and pay for their expensive service and liquor."

Jong-Suk asked Suk-Ho while pouring beer in Gun-Ho's and Suk-Ho's glasses.

"Bro, you have a lot of friends who seemed to be rich. Many of your friends are riding a luxurious car."

"They do have luxurious cars; that's true. But that doesn't mean they have money to spend at a room salon. It's not like they are running a big company."

Gun-Ho gulped the beer and said while putting his empty glass back on the table.

"Let's go there today!"

"Bro, are you drunk? It's way more expensive than we could afford."

Suk-Ho also tried to talk him out of it.

"Jong-Suk is right. It's not like we are having a special occasion to go to a place like that, such as closing a very important deal or something. It's a waste of

money. You have never been to a room salon before, haven't you? Just drink your beer."

Gun-Ho, Suk-Ho, and Jong-Suk walked out of Suk-Ho's bar after having a few drinks and headed to the restaurant close to Hamilton Hotel. They continued to drink beer in that restaurant. After the three men got drunk, they all couldn't think straight. Gun-Ho stood up first while staggering.

"Let's go! Let's go to the third place, the room salon where the curly hair guy Han-Young Bang is working. Let's go!"

Jong-Suk stood up next while staggering as well and then he yelled,

"Let's go! F*ck! Gun-Ho bro made some money. Let's go!"

"Hey, Suk-Ho! It's your town. Get a taxi for us!"

"Okay, let's go! Let's have that Ballantine's 17 years old whiskey there!"

They eventually took a taxi and headed to the room salon located in Gangnam close to Samsung Subway Station.

Gun-Ho was so drunk that he didn't even look at the room salon's business sign before he walked down to a basement of a building. There were young men wearing a suit at the main entrance; they must be bouncers. They all had the same hair cut that made their head look like a square.

"Welcome our brothers."

They gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho's party and then they grabbed Gun-Ho, Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk's arms and took them inside the room salon.

The room salon was located in the basement of a building and its interior was decorated luxuriously like a palace. There were Ionic style columns in the room. Even though he was so drunk, Gun-Ho touched the column wondering if the column was made of stone or plastic.

One of the bouncers clapped loudly and said,

"Customers here. Serve them well!"

A waiter wearing a white shirt and bow tie came out with a broad smile and led Gun-Ho's party to a room. The waiter looked like a weasel.

"Hey, bring Manager Bang here!"

"He is not here right now."

"Where did he go? Bring him here as I said!"

Suk-Ho was so drunk and he started yelling.

Young ladies came into the room with a tray. There were wet wipes and bottles of water on the tray.

The man with a bow tie came back to the room and said while taking Suk-Ho's jacket and hanging on the wall.

"Manager Bang is coming. Just give him several minutes. Let me take an order for you. What would you like to drink?"

"Let's have Ballantine's, bros!"

Jong-Suk's words started to slur; he must be very drunk already. When Jong-Suk asked for Ballantine's, Suk-Ho who was sitting in a chair while breathing heavily jumped up from his seat and said,

"Ballantine's is too expensive! Bring us Chivas Regal instead! The last liquor that our former president, Chung-Hee Park had before he died."

"Alright. I will bring you a salad and fruits for snacks as well. Also, I will ask three ladies to join you."

"We came here because we heard there were many pretty girls working here. So do what you have to do, okay? Manager Bang is my best friend! You know that?"

"Oh, okay, brothers, or sirs!"

The man with a bow tie gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho's party before leaving the room.

After a while, two waitresses came to the room with a cute smile; they brought a bottle of Chivas Regal, cute whiskey glasses, and some snacks and fruits that were beautifully carved.

Note*

Room salon – a type of a bar in Korea where you can drink in a room with bar hostesses.

79 Secret Bar at Hannam Town 1 – PART 2

The waitresses of the room salon set up the table beautifully with the whiskey glasses, snacks and fruits they brought in. They prepared ice cubes for whiskey as well, in case anyone wanted a whiskey on the rocks.

"Bring us three or four bottles of beer too."

The way Suk-Ho ordered beers was telling that this was not his first time in a room salon. He skillfully opened the Chivas Regal bottle and poured into each person's whiskey glass. When the waitress brought beers, Suk-Ho asked,

"Do you want a bomb shot?"

Gun-Ho waved his two hands simultaneously showing that he didn't want a bomb shot. He seemed to be too drunk to say a word.

"You have such low alcohol tolerance. How are you going to manage to run a big business with that?"

The three men started drinking beers and Chiva Regal. After about ten minutes, the same waiter wearing a bow tie came back to their room.

"I've brought three ladies for you. If you don't like any of them, you just let me know, then I will bring a new girl."

Three young ladies wearing flimsy half nude clothes came into the room. Their faces were covered with a thick layer of makeup.

"Who is the youngest?"

As Suk-Ho asked, a girl who looked young came forward.

"Okay. You sit next to the guy over there. He is the youngest among us."

Suk-Ho indicated the seat next to Jong-Suk. The girl quickly went to Suk-Ho

and sat next to him.

"Let me see who is prettier."

Suk-Ho asked one of two other ladies to sit next to Gun-Ho; she was shorter than the other girl. Suk-Ho then asked the tall girl to sit next to himself. Gun-Ho thought the girl next to him who was a bit shorter than the other looked prettier.

Gun-Ho was nervous because of the girl who was half naked and sitting next to him. He could smell Chanel perfume from her. Gun-Ho was startled when the lady next to him held his arm. That lady started laughing by Gun-Ho's reaction.

"Hahaha. I guess this is your first time in a place like this."

She took a piece of apple from the plate on the table and bit half of it. She then put the remaining half, which of course had her saliva into Gun-Ho's mouth.

"Um... it's...um... it's okay. I will take it myself."

"Hahaha, he is stuttering."

All of the three girls there started laughing.

"These two men here are virgin. You girls are very lucky today. You'd better serve them well tonight."

Suk-Ho said vigorously while pouring Chivas Regal in three glasses and handing it to the three girls. The three ladies gulped liquor and started smoking.

– What happened next will not be described in this novel since it is lewd. (This novel is not rated R) –

Gun-Ho opened his eyes. It was not his home.

"Where am I?"

He remembered that the bouncers helped him walk and placed him in a motel in a building next to the room salon building.

"Oh, this is a motel room. I guess I spent a night here."

Gun-Ho looked at his watch. It was five in the morning. Gun-Ho thought about whether he should call Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk; he then decided not to.

Gun-Ho walked out of the motel. It was still dark outside. The sun was not up yet. There was a street sweeper cleaning the street.

Gun-Ho walked to the main street to take a taxi and came back to his office-tel in Yeongdeungpo District. As he was having a bad headache, he laid down on his bed again.

When Gun-Ho woke up later that day, he started calculating how much he spent last night.

"The liquor and tips for the ladies cost me more than 1.5 million won. That is the same amount of money as my monthly income when I worked in a factory. Ha! Ordinary people will not go to a room salon spending this much in one night. I don't think I would go there again, either because I don't like their liquor. I went there by curiosity but it's not my type."

Gun-Ho had money but he didn't have a job. He didn't know what to say whenever someone asked him about his occupation. For that reason, he wanted to do something that would generate income.

"What should I do? What about a fast food restaurant like Lotteria? Or a coffee shop like Starbucks? Since Starbucks doesn't franchise their stores, maybe I should do Tom N Toms or Pascucci. Nah, if I open one of those, I will have to spend my time operating it. My main focus has to be a real estate or financial business."

After giving a lot of thought to his business item, he came up with an office-tel or OneRoomTel business.

"I can buy several office-tels and rent them out."

It could be a good business as long as all tenants were nice enough to pay their rent every month without any issue just like Gun-Ho himself had done, otherwise, it could be troublesome.

"What about OneRoomTel? The luxurious one with a monthly rent of over 400,000 won. I had once thought about taking a residential manager position in a

OneRoomTel while studying for the level-9 government job exam. Should I run a OneRoomTel?"

Gun-Ho searched any OneRoomTel for sale on the Internet.

"A newly renovated luxurious OneRoomTel costs about 300 million won. Even if I buy three of them, it would cost me less than 1 billion won. According to the sales advertisement, the income from one OneRoomTel would be 6,000,000 won, but I don't think it would generate that much. Assuming that I make 4,000,000 won from each OneRoomTel, I can make 12,000,000 won per month. I can hire a manager who would handle the business. It seems like a good business for me. The business looks simple and it wouldn't require my constant presence."

Gun-Ho wanted to buy his own place as soon as possible and move out of this office-tel he was currently residing. He also wanted to buy a car.

"I want to buy a condo in Gangnam. The condo's price in Gangnam is always on the rise no matter what. It will be one of my investment property, so I'd better get an expensive one. I've done it before when I was in China. I bought an expensive condo there and its price became more expensive."

Gun-Ho opened an auction website and looked for a condo for sale in Gangnam. One condo drew Gun-Ho's attention.

"One TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town is on the market. It's 1.8 billion won. If no one bids on this condo at their first try at auction, the price will drop below 1.5 billion won. I'd better ask someone who knows well about auction before I place my bid. Let's ask the president of the private institution in Yongsan District. I took an auction course there. The president is giving a consultation as well."

Gun-Ho calculated again.

"I have 19.8 billion won. I will spend 1 billion for a business like OneRoomTel, 1.5 billion for my own condo, 0.4 billion for my parents' condo, and for other miscellaneous spending such as a car, furniture, etc. of 0.1 billion. I will then need about 3 billion in total. I will keep the remaining 16.8 billion won until I find a good business or investment opportunity."

While Gun-Ho was having a happy time planning his future, it occurred to him that he wanted to treat Chairman Lee a dinner.

"Oh, I want to treat Chairman Lee and Master Park a dinner or something. Will it be okay for me to call them? Will they have time for me?"

Gun-Ho looked for the business card that Chairman Lee had given to him before He left for China. There was no cell phone number but only office number was on the business card. He made a call to the number. After ringing twice, a young lady answered the phone—probably his secretary.

"Hello?"

"Dongil Paper Chairman's office? May I talk to the chairman please?"

"May I tell him who's calling?"

"Umm, he will know if you tell him Gun-Ho Goo from Pocheon fishing site."

"He is not available right now. I will let him know that you called."

Gun-Ho hung up the phone.

"Is she just telling me he was not there even though he was there?"

Gun-Ho was getting ready to go out to have a Jjajangmyeon when he received a call from Chairman Lee.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? I was told that you called?"

"Chairman Lee? How have you been?"

"I haven't been in the fishing site lately because of the cold weather. Let's go fishing once the weather gets warmer."

"I was calling you because I wanted to buy you a dinner because I got a good result from my recent investment."

"Me? What does your investment have to do with me?"

"Your advice has helped me a lot in my investment decision. I would really like

to buy you a dinner. Please let me know your convenient time. I also like to invite your friend, Master Park for dinner as well."

"Haha, thank you for the invitation. I will then pick a good date and let you know."

Gun-Ho received a call from Chairman Lee in that evening.

"How about this coming Friday? In Hannam Town. Master Park said he would join us."

"I will be there, sir."

"You probably don't know the restaurant we picked, so come to the Soonchunhyang Hospital in Hannam Town by 7 PM. Manager Gweon will be waiting for you in front of the hospital."

"Thank you. Thank you."

80 Secret Bar at Hannam Town 2 – PART 1

Friday came around.

Gun-Ho wore a suit and went to Hannam Town. The sunset was early these days because it was wintertime. It was dark outside, but the lights from the stores illuminated the street.

"This neighborhood has a romantic vibe."

There were many single houses in the neighborhood along with several foreign embassies of various countries such as Switzerland, Thailand, Cambodia, etc. That was why the road in front of Soonchunhyang Hospital was called the Embassy Road.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, over here!"

It was Manager Gweon who had been assisting Chairman Lee.

"How have you been, Manager Gweon?"

"Long time no see. I'm so glad to see you again."

After shaking hands with Manager Gweon, Gun-Ho followed him to a quiet alley in the neighborhood. When they arrived at a single house with a landscaped yard, Manager Gweon asked Gun-Ho to get in there. There was no restaurant sign. Gun-Ho could only see a small acrylic sign on its brick wall next to the front door.

"Pine tree?"

The sign said 'pine tree,' and below the word 'pine tree', it said 'restaurant' in a small font. Gun-Ho thought that no pedestrian would be able to see the small-font restaurant sign and recognize the house as a restaurant.

"Welcome."

A young man in a suit came out of the house and greeted Gun-Ho. He didn't let Gun-Ho in the house though; instead, he led Gun-Ho to the back side of the house. There was another door leading to the house next door. The house next door was also a single house with a yard.

"Come this way. Watch your steps. They are stone stairs."

Following the young man, Gun-Ho passed by the quiet yard which had a big pine tree in it and entered the front door.

"Welcome."

A lady who looked like in her 50s wearing a traditional Korean dress came out to greet Gun-Ho. Even with her mature age, she was very beautiful. The lady showed Gun-Ho into a room where Chairman Lee and Master Park were. The room was decorated with an embroidered folding screen, and the two old men were sitting at a floor table. Chairman Lee was wearing a vest without a jacket.

"Hello, I am honored to meet you." The lady said to Gun-Ho.

"Ms. Jang, why don't you bring a floor cushion for him?"

The lady whose name was Ms. Jang brought a floor cushion embroidered with a crane.

"Have a seat."

"I initially suggested going to a puffer fish restaurant in the vicinity, but Master Park insisted that we should come here."

Chairman Lee seemed to be concerned that Gun-Ho might find it uncomfortable being in a rather unique restaurant setting. Master Park stuck his head out to Gun-Ho.

"ShinWangJaeWang young man! You became rich, right? I told you that you would become rich when you reached the age of 35. Am I right?"

"Right, I think you told me that. You have a very good memory, sir."

"I memorized all about your fate. It's very unique! Your fate is to become dirty

rich!"

Chairman Lee seemed to be embarrassed by his friend, Master Park's choice of words.

"What is dirty rich? Rich is rich."

"Young man! I was right, wasn't I? You made billions!"

"Oh, umm, yes, I... I did make money."

"Then you can treat us here. Ms. Jang, bring us the table!"

Ms. Jang smiled elegantly and stood up from a sitting position.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, do you recognize this lady?!"

"Umm, I don't know..."

Gun-Ho looked at Ms. Jang's face again. She surely looked familiar.

"Probably you are too young to recognize her. She is a famous actress, Mi-Hyang Jang in our old days."

Gun-Ho now recognized her face. He might have seen her in a magazine.

"Oh, really?"

After a moment, two young men in a white shirt brought a big floor table. The table was already set with all kinds of Korean food and liquor; there was Sinseollo* as well.

Ms. Jang entered into the room and served liquor in a gold-colored pot.

"It seems like you are reversing your age. How come you're not aging at all and keep a resilient young skin?"

"Hahaha, are you saying I should age with all those wrinkles like you do, Master Park?"

"I don't have that many wrinkles. I am still a young guy. Listen to what this

woman says."

Master Park didn't seem to be a gentleman when he was talking with a woman.

The door was opened and two young ladies who were also wearing a traditional Korean dress entered the room. Those women sat next to Chairman Lee and Gun-Ho to serve them.

Gun-Ho looked at the profile of the lady sitting next to him. She looked like in her mid-20s and she had very long eyelashes. She had a different vibe from the girls Gun-Ho saw in the room salon. This lady seemed to be more cultured and refined.

"Hey, you women! Drink it!"

Master Park handed a glass of liquor to those two young ladies. The ladies sipped the liquor while turning their heads slightly to the side and covering their mouth and the glass.

"Ms. Jang, pay attention to this young man right here. He will become very very rich soon."

"I just heard he made billions already. He is already rich then."

Ms. Jang said while putting a piece of Galbi-jjim* on Gun-Ho's plate.

"We don't call a person with several billion won rich. You have that much money, Ms. Jang. Then you are rich too."

"I am not rich."

"You are! When you were younger, you made money by mesmerizing men, and now you are making money by running this secret bar."

"Don't say that, Master Park. I am not doing well these days because you haven't come here as often as before anymore."

"President Goo, let's drink."

Chairman Lee called Gun-Ho President Goo. The lady sitting next to Gun-Ho

poured more liquor in his glass.

"So, how did you make the money?"

"I invested in real estate and the stock market. I invested in real estate when I was in China, and this time I invested in the stock market."

"You probably invested in the stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project."

Gun-Ho smiled without saying a word.

"The real estate investment is good. However, you shouldn't cling on stocks for too long. Once you make money from stock investments, you should get out of there right away unless you have some kind of certainty to continue to invest."

"I will take heed of what you said, sir. I think you are absolutely right."

"In this country, the insiders share information exclusively within their inner circle. They establish some investment company, issue stock to raise money, and then make a short sale of the stock so they can make more money once the stock prices go down. As long as short-selling is allowed in our stock exchange system, little people can hardly make money by investing in the stock market because they don't have the necessary information. The recent stock hike involved with Four Major Rivers Project was a special case influenced by politics. You shouldn't expect to make money again in the stock market like that case. You shouldn't invest in the stock market without certainty."

"I will keep that in mind."

"Once the stock prices go up, the insiders will issue a CB (convertible bond). Bastards!"

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho thought he was getting more than he would have to pay today. The advice that Chairman Lee was giving to Gun-Ho was so valuable that what he had to pay for today's dinner and liquor seemed nothing.

"The stock market will shrink in the future unless the problem in the stock exchange system that I just mentioned is resolved. If an alternative investment

option emerges, the investors will move there rather than the stock market, virtual money for example."

"Virtual money?"

"Haha. I am just thinking since we are living in the digital age."

Gun-Ho later was stunned when the Bitcoin storm arrived. When Chairman Lee had mentioned about digital money, no one even thought of the very idea. Gun-Ho thought later that Chairman Lee was indeed an incredibly wise man. He was absolutely different from the old men in the subway, who were raising voices saying the younger passengers must give up their seats to them.

"What's your plan now?"

"I am thinking of acquiring real estate and rent them out for now, and then I'll start running a business when I see a good opportunity."

"Hmm..."

Master Park got annoyed while hearing the boring conversation between Gun-Ho and Chairman Lee.

"Stop talking about money. We are here to have fun, right? Then let's have fun! Hey, you girls! Sing a song or play a musical instrument or do something."

Note*

Sinseollo – It is also called the royal hot pot. All sorts of vegetables and meat in a rich broth.

Galbi-jjim – Korean style beef short ribs dish.

81 Secret Bar at Hannam Town 2 – PART 2

The young ladies brought a Gayageum* and the lady who was sitting next to Gun-Ho started playing it. She sounded like a professional. One lady turned off half of the lights in the room and Gun-Ho could see the yard better through the window. The outdoor lighting looked brighter.

It was an amazing night with an alluring vibe. Gun-Ho was listening to the beautiful melody from the Gayageum which was being played by a beautiful woman while looking at the pine tree in the yard outside.

Chairman Lee and Master Park were immersed in the Gayageum melody, and their bodies were swaying in the music.

Once the lady finished playing, Chairman Lee and Master Park clapped.

"Good job. It's beautiful. Drink this."

Chairman Lee poured liquor in a glass and handed it to the lady who just played Gayageum.

Once the old men became drunk, they were busy talking about their old days. Gun-Ho felt bored.

"I should have asked Manager Gweon to join us."

Gun-Ho felt bored and he talked to the lady who played the Gayageum earlier.

"You are very good at playing the Gayageum. Where did you learn it?"

"School."

When the lady smiled, a dimple appeared on her face; it looked attractive.

"Where did you go to school?"

"I went to a school in Jeonju City."

While Gun-Ho was talking with the lady, Ms. Jang entered the room, and Master Park complained to her.

"Where have you been? You were supposed to be here with us. Where did you go? Did you hide a new husband in another room?"

"Stop fooling around, Master Park."

"This young man is still not married. Why don't you find a girl for him?"

"Really?"

Ms. Jang looked at Gun-Ho's face and Gun-Ho blushed with embarrassment. He also felt the lady's eyes on him, the one who played the Gayageum. Gun-Ho's cheeks were burning.

"Come visit us often. I might get you a really good girl. Who knows?"

"Why don't you sing a song for us?"

"Pour me a drink first before asking me to sing a song."

"Damn woman!"

Master Park poured liquor in her glass.

Ms. Jang started singing after gulping the liquor. She was singing an old song that Gun-Ho had never heard before. She probably picked this old song for the two old men, Chairman Lee and Master Park. Gun-Ho was stunned when she started singing; she sounded like a professional.

"That damn woman sings really well!"

Master Park poured liquor in Ms. Jang's glass again. The beautiful alluring moment with music and all sorts of dainties was fading away deep into the night.

After listening to one more Gayageum play, they walked out of the secret bar in Hannam Town. Before Gun-Ho left the bar, Ms. Jang slipped her business card into his pocket covertly.

Manager Gweon ran to Gun-Ho's party when he saw them walking out of the bar.

"Manager Gweon? Where have you been? Why didn't you join us?"

"Nah. I feel more comfortable out here. It's not my style sitting in a room with old men having dinner and liquor."

Chairman Lee and Master Park seemed to be drunk a bit and went to the bathroom while staggering slightly.

"I didn't know there was a place like this."

"Many politicians and people running a big company comes to this bar. Master Park consults them covertly about their future, fate, and business."

"Oh, really?"

"Many people with power and money live in this area, Hannam Town and Itaewon Town, and they often come to this bar. Oh, Chairman Lee is coming."

Manager Gweon ran to Chairman Lee.

Gun-Ho had now been in a room salon and a secret bar with the money he recently made.

"I guess I—an ex-factory worker—am a successful man. I spent several million won but it was worth it. I learned a lot. However, I don't like the room salon. I'd better avoid going there again."

Gun-Ho went to the private institution he had used to go for an auction course to see the president. Gun-Ho wanted to consult with him about the TowerPalace condo he saw in an auction website earlier.

The president was reading a newspaper in his office when Gun-Ho went to see him; maybe he didn't have a class to teach these days.

"Hello, sir?"

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. Please come in. So, you want to consult about real

property. What do you have in mind?"

"It's a condo."

"Oh, it's not a land, but a condo."

"Yes, it's about the TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town."

"What's the appraised value?"

"It's 1.8 billion won. It's 50 pyung large."

"Wow! 1.8 billion won! It's an expensive condo. Are your parents buying the condo?"

"Haha, whatever way you want to think; I'm fine with it. I'm not buying just to live there, but I consider it as an investment as well."

"The TowerPalace is a high-rise residential building and since the area is very popular you won't incur any loss with the condo even in the future."

"Right, so I do want to buy that condo, but since I don't have any experience with an auction sale, I'd like to have some help from an expert like you, sir."

"Let me see. For the auction in Dogok Town, I know someone who's right for you. He is a good friend of mine and he offers consultation on auction in Gangnam District. He is very good and professional. My class starts this coming Monday so I will be busy then, so my good friend will help you."

The president made a call to his friend right away.

"Manager Oh? It's me."

"Oh, bro, what's up?"

"I have someone here who wants to buy a condo at an auction in Dogok Town. Would you like to meet with him?"

"I will be available after 2 PM today. I have to go to the court in the morning; I have to attend an auction there."

In the afternoon, Gun-Ho went to the consulting firm with the address and map that the president of the private institution of auction gave to him. The firm was located in a small building in the vicinity of Seoul National University of Education in Seocho Town.

Gun-Ho walked up to the third floor to their office. There was two staff working there and one man wearing a sports cap sitting on a sofa while looking at his cell phone.

"Is Manager Oh here?"

"It's me."

"The president of an auction institution referred me to this firm."

"Oh, sure. Have a seat."

"I want to acquire a condo in Dogok Town at an auction."

"Do you know the case number?"

"Huh? No, but it's a TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town."

The man—Manager Oh—sat at his desk and started searching for something with his computer.

"Is it the 50 pyung large condo?"

"That's the one."

"This condo just came to the auction. Come again after the first auction fails. Since the condo is situated in a popular area, the second auction will surely not fail."

"What should I do now?"

"Just observe the first auction. The second auction will be held on the 24th after the Lunar New Year's Day. Bring the bid deposit when you come for the second auction."

"How much should I prepare?"

Manager Oh calculated the amount with his electronic calculator.

"It's going to be 144 million won. You need to bring your ID and your registered stamp. Why don't we make the consulting contract now?"

"Do you take care of transferring the real property as well?"

"Of course. Once you get the condo by auction, we will handle everything from letting the current occupant move out from the condo to handing over the condo key to you."

That sounded like they were not going to do much for the fee they would charge, Gun-Ho thought.

"It might look not much of work if you just think about it; however, letting the current occupant move out from the condo itself is hard work. If you do it by yourself, you could get yourself in trouble."

"What kind of trouble?"

"If the occupant refused to vacate the condo, what would you do? Are you going to drag that person out of the condo? Say, you explain to that person that you bought the condo by auction so he or she has to leave. What do you think they would say? They will probably ask you a high moving expense. You can try if you want."

"I see."

"You are going to live in that condo, right? If you get involved in a physical altercation with the current occupant and kick them out, what would the neighbors in the very same building think of you? They are the residents you will encounter on a daily basis after you move into the condo."

That made sense. Gun-Ho made a consulting contract with Manager Oh.

Note*

Gayageums – A traditional musical instrument of Korea.

82 Moving to Gangnam 1 – PART 1

It was after the Lunar New Year's Day when Gun-Ho went to Guweol Town near the city hall in Incheon to look for a condo for his parents. When he got off from the subway at Seokcheon's Four-Way Intersection, the first thing he could see was a majestic high-rise residential complex—Hillstate.

"I would buy a 25 or 30 pyung large condo for my parents; however, since Jeong-Ah would stay with them most of the time, I'd better buy a bit larger condo than that."

When he saw a realtor's office at a commercial building, he entered the office. The realtor was a female who looked like in her late 40s.

"Hello, I came to see a condo."

"Are you selling or buying?"

"I want to buy one. Around 50 pyung large."

The realtor lady took out her note and looked for a condo that was currently on the market.

"We have one on the fourth floor. Would you like to take a look?"

"How much is it?"

"It's 420 million won." (It costs more these days.)

"It's expensive. Is there anything else that came out for a quick sale?"

"I don't see any quick sale, but there is another condo with a tenant."

"When will the lease expire?"

"It says it will expire this fall, so I would say about six more months left."

"That's too late for me. Let me leave my number here. Would you give me a call

if you see any good condos on the higher floors come on the market?"

"Hold on a second. I might be able to find a condo for a quick sale."

The realtor made a call to another realtor's office.

"Dongwoo realtor's office? You have a 50 pyung large condo for a quick sale, right?"

"I don't have a 50 pyung, but I do have a 45 pyung condo in building number 511."

"How much is it?"

"The owner said they won't sell it below 400 million won."

Gun-Ho was thinking that maybe the 45 pyung was better for his parents and the 50 pyung condo was too big to maintain—like cleaning it. Just three people would be living there after all.

"I will take the 45 pyung condo."

The realtor lady called the other realtor again to request a tour to that condo. It seemed that realtors were all connected to each other and shared information.

"He said the condo is vacant right now. Would you like to see it now?"

Gun-Ho followed the realtor to see the 45 pyung large condo. Since it was a newly constructed condo, it was clean, and he didn't have to do anything before moving in.

"You don't even have to redo the wall and floor."

The realtor's sales pitch continued.

"As you see, the kitchen and bathroom are brand new. They have never been used. Moreover, look outside the window. The view from here is magnificent."

Gun-Ho bought the condo and took the purchase contract that day. The owner was living in the vicinity of the condo and came right away when he was told there was a buyer waiting for him. The owner looked like he was in his 60s.

"Since the condo is vacant, you can move in any day you want after paying the remaining sale price."

"I will pay the remainder after a week."

The owner handed to Gun-Ho, the real estate registration and the receipt of the last HOA payment of that condo.

After completing the sales contract, Gun-Ho walked out of the realtor's office and looked at the majestic condominium complex again.

"Whew. If I lived in a condo like this when I was in high school, I wouldn't have had to suffer because of money and my poor family."

Gun-Ho felt mixed feelings.

Gun-Ho headed to his parents' home. On the way there, he saw his brother-in-law buying something in a supermarket close to his parents' townhouse apartment.

"Gun-Ho? What are you doing here? Jeong-Ah, your uncle is here. Say hello to him."

"Hi."

Jeong-Ah said hello to Gun-Ho while hugging her snack; she was cute. Gun-Ho smiled and gave 10,000 won to Jeong-Ah.

"I just made a sales contract for the condo in Guweol Town. I will ask my parents to put their apartment on the market."

"You already made a contract? That early? I will talk to your mom about placing their apartment on the market."

"Umm, I gotta go now. Please tell my mom that I had to go because I'm really busy. Jeong-Ah, bye, bye."

Gun-Ho made the payment of the remaining condo sales price. He was thinking of buying the condo under his name, but he placed his parents' name instead because if he successfully acquired the TowerPalace condo at the auction it

would make him own two residential properties which would cause tax issues.

"I will ask them to throw out all the furniture and stuff they have been using in that townhouse apartment before moving to their new place."

Gun-Ho filled the new condo with new furniture and household appliances: refrigerator, sofa, washer, dining table, gas oven, big screen TV, etc. They were all new and expensive ones. He even purchased a desk for Jeong-Ah. The condo looked wonderful with new furniture in it. The spacious 45 pyung condo went elegantly well with the luxurious furniture Gun-Ho purchased.

He didn't buy an air conditioner yet since summer wouldn't begin anytime soon.

It was a moving day. Gun-Ho went to his parents' old apartment in Juan, Incheon. It was Sunday, so his sister was there helping his parents to pack up without having to go to work.

"Just throw those refrigerator, dining table, TV and all. There is a new gas oven in the new condo so toss out the old one."

"It's still working fine. I can clean it and it is still usable."

Gun-Ho's parents were loading the moving truck with all the old refrigerator, gas oven, table, and stuff when Gun-Ho raised his voice asking to unload them. Their old stuff was being unloaded, and his parents stared at their old furniture and stuff get dumped on the ground for quite a while.

After throwing out most of his parents' old stuff, the moving became easier. Gun-Ho didn't even need to rent an aerial ladder truck to move the stuff up to the condo.

"Mom, dad, this is the home you will be living in."

Gun-Ho's parents were stunned once they looked around the condo. Their jaws dropped in amazement. Gun-Ho remembered when his mom compared her life with his aunt's after she visited his aunt's 30 pyung large condo; she had always been envious of her. This 45 pyung large condo had a two-door refrigerator, a sofa, and a dining table.

"Oh my God! Oh my God!"

Gun-Ho's mother couldn't hide her excitement and amazement.

"Live happily ever after in this home, mom... dad."

"Oh, my goodness. Look at the floor."

After stroking the floor a few times, Gun-Ho's mother sank to the floor and shed tears.

"Thank you, my son. I guess I lived this long to have this luxurious life because of you."

Gun-Ho's mother blinked her eyes which had become small like date seeds with her age in her wrinkled face; tears ran from her eyes. She then held Gun-Ho's hands. Gun-Ho could feel his mother's rough and wrinkled hands and he felt sad. At that moment, Jeong-Ah ran to Gun-Ho's mother.

"Grandma, is this our home?"

"No, Jeong-Ah!"

Gun-Ho's sister quickly dragged Jeong-Ah's hand toward her.

"Yes, it is our home, Jeong-Ah. Your uncle bought a desk for you too, over there."

Gun-Ho's mother said to her granddaughter.

"Whoa, it's my desk."

Jeong-Ah ran to the room where her desk was placed.

After finishing a cursory unpacking, Gun-Ho explained to his parents how to use the new home appliances which were already placed in the condo. Gun-Ho then called a Chinese restaurant and ordered Jajangmyeon and Tangsuyuk* for delivery.

The movers already left without having their meal. Gun-Ho's family sat at the new dining table after the food Gun-Ho ordered had arrived. It had been a while since Gun-Ho's whole family had a meal together. It reminded Gun-Ho of the old

days when he was little.

Gun-Ho was smoking in the veranda after the meal when his sister came to talk to him.

"Gun-Ho, I'm sorry that I had to leave Jeong-Ah with our parents here. I'm so worried that she might scratch something in this new condo."

"This is not my condo. It's our parents' home."

"Is it okay with you to leave Jeong-Ah here for a while? Your brother-in-law and I, we are trying hard to improve our financial situation."

"Huh? You don't have to ask me, sister. It's our parents' home, so as long as they are okay with it then it is okay. It seems our parents like to be with Jeong-Ah. She is entertaining them."

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. I didn't want to impose."

Tears welled up in her eyes.

Gun-Ho was getting ready to leave for Seoul.

"Why don't you stay here and spend the night? There are many rooms you can use. And I am cooking for dinner."

"Mom... dad, you're probably really tired already. Take a good rest now. I will send you the living expenses to your bank account, mom. Don't forget to pay the HOA on time. I'm leaving now. Bye, Jeong-Ah!"

Gun-Ho walked out of the condo. He felt good while heading to the subway station. Gun-Ho turned around to see the condo complex again.

"Don't worry about your parents anymore!"

The majestic high-rise residential complex seemed to say that to him.

Note*

Tangsuyuk – Korean Chinese deep-fried pork dish with sweet and sour sauce.

83 Moving to Gangnam 1 – PART 2

Several days passed by after Gun-Ho's parents moved into the new condo.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from the consulting firm in Seocho Town.

"The first auction for the TowerPalace condo you are interested in has failed as expected, and the next auction is scheduled the day after tomorrow. Are you aware of it?"

"Yes, I already prepared the bid deposit."

"The day before yesterday, I verified the auction documents of that condo and visited the condo as well. Its location is very nice."

"Oh, really? Thank you for your work."

"You don't have to worry about the secured creditors listed in the real estate registration after you buy the property at the auction; they will be all released. I already checked the statements on the property, tenancy document, and the appraisal report. I didn't see any problem."

"Oh, good to know."

"There is no tenant who could exercise any right on the property. The condo is actually occupied by the owner."

"Oh, I see."

"On the auction day, I will arrive at the court earlier. When you come, don't forget to bring your ID and your stamp. Also, bring more money than the bid deposit in case there is a competitor we have to beat."

"How much more do you think I should prepare?"

"I recommend bringing 20 million won. You possibly will not use all of them if there are not many competitors."

"Okay, I will prepare them."

"I will guide you through the process. I will see you then."

"Okay, thank you."

On the auction day, Gun-Ho went to Seoul Central District Court in Seocho Town. There were a lot of people at the court. Some people were distributing information sheet about the auction at the court entrance.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, I'm here."

Manager Oh from the consulting firm was already there waiting for Gun-Ho. He was wearing the same sports cap, and he was chewing a gum.

"Since the TowerPalace condo is an expensive property, I don't expect many people bidding on it. Why don't you take the bidder's ticket and envelope over there?"

Manager Oh seemed to have another client he had to assist that day; he was waiting for someone.

"The bailiff of the court will conduct the auction. When you write your offer price, you must be very careful. If you write the wrong number, you could lose your bid deposit. Verify the case number closely."

Manager Oh was greeting someone who he had been waiting for. It was a middle-aged woman.

"Ma'am, I think there will be quite a lot of competitors for the property you are interested in because that commercial building is making money."

"Then what should I do? I really want that building."

"Add two more to the price."

A man who was passing stopped to say hi to Manager Oh.

"Hey, are you participating in the auction for this lady as well? Why don't you skip this one?"

That man glanced at the lady and smiled.

Someone asked to be quiet and get ready for the auction. It seemed like the auction would start soon. Gun-Ho sat on a chair. The courtroom was filled with people and some people were standing at the back of the room because there was no empty seat in the room.

At the ring of the bell, the bailiff announced that the auction had started. He started off with a short introduction of guiding the participants what to expect during the auction.

Gun-Ho wrote his offer price of 1,512 million won as instructed by Manager Oh earlier, and included the bid deposit of 151.20 million won in the envelope. The bid deposit was 10% of the offer price.

"Our father in heaven, please allow me to win this time!"

Gun-Ho submitted the envelope while praying to God. It seemed like there were three people including Gun-Ho competing for the same condo.

Gun-Ho looked around.

There was no gentleman wearing a suit or a fashionable lady at the courtroom; only men and women wearing a jacket or a coat, who could ordinarily be seen in the subway station. There were some properties with a starting price of several billion won like a commercial building or a condo in Gangnam. Gun-Ho thought some of these people must have that much money to pay for those properties.

After everyone in the courtroom submitted their offer price, the bailiff announced that the bidding was over. A staff standing next to the bailiff opened each envelope for a specific real property, and he let the bailiff know who won the auction. The bailiff then announced the case number, the successful bidder's name, and the auction price.

"Case number 000, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo who offered 1,512 million won the auction."

"I got it!"

Gun-Ho jumped up from his seat, walked to the bailiff, showed his ID to him,

and then received the successful bidder's ticket.

After Gun-Ho walked out of the courtroom, Manager Oh was waiting for him while still chewing a gum.

"Congratulations."

"How do you know already?"

"I heard it outside the door."

"Then are you going to start the process?"

"No, we need to wait until the due date of the filing of the appeal. During that period, the owner or anyone who has an interest in this condo can make an appeal for the sales decision. I don't think anything will happen, but we have to wait by then."

"Oh, really? For how long should we wait?"

"If nothing happens in ten days, then prepare the remaining funds for the condo price."

After ten days, Gun-Ho received a call from Manager Oh of the consulting firm.

"Ten days is up. I will start negotiating with the owner who is occupying the condo. If you want to make the process smooth, you need to pay him the moving cost. You have heard of paying the moving cost, right?"

"I learned about it during training. How much do you think would be adequate?"

"It depends on the person. Some could ask 10 million won. We never know."

"Is it legally required?"

"No, but the occupant could refuse to move out really hard. They usually have nothing to lose at this stage, so it is really hard if they decided to resist."

"What do we do if that happens?"

"Don't worry about it. That's our job. We sometimes threaten them or convince

them. If they refuse to move out even after the unlawful detainer suit, we will drag them out with their belongings."

"Oh, wow..."

Gun-Ho thought the auction sale for a residential property where a person was still living in could be really harsh to the occupants, unlike a building or a land.

"Well, do what you have to do. Please negotiate to reach a good price but do not raise your voice during the process."

"Okay. I will let you know after I meet with the owner."

Gun-Ho thought he made the right decision to let a consulting firm handle the whole process rather than handling it himself.

"I hope I could move in within a month."

Gun-Ho had to withdraw money from his stock account to prepare the remaining price of his condo. He could just withdraw using an ATM if the amount was small, but he had to visit the office for a large amount of money. The branch office that was holding Gun-Ho's account was located in Suwon City. He had to go that far.

"I have to go that far. Once I move to the TowerPalace condo, I will move my account. I went there last time when I had to pay for my parent's condo in Guweon Town. I have to go there again. Let's transfer around 3 billion won to my bank account this time; I might need the money later to open my own business.

When Gun-Ho requested the transfer of the funds, the staff lady at the stock branch office was astonished.

"3 billion won?!"

Gun-Ho was sitting on a chair when a middle-aged man wearing glasses came to him urgently.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? Hi, I am the manager of this branch office."

The branch manager bowed respectfully to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho came here for his parents' condo last time, but the branch manager was not here.

"Why don't you come to my office and have a cup of tea?"

Gun-Ho thought it could be tiresome, but he stood up from his seat and followed the branch manager to his office.

84 Moving to Gangnam 2 – PART 1

The branch manager of the stock brokerage firm in Suwon City gave his business card to Gun-Ho.

"I don't have my business card with me."

"That's fine, sir. I wanted to meet with you. We take care of our VIP clients separately."

Gun-Ho firmly said,

"I will have to withdraw my funds next month because of my business."

"All of the funds?"

The branch manager's face hardened.

"I'm moving from Incheon to Seoul soon, so I have to move my account to the branch over there anyway."

"Why don't you leave some of your funds with us? We provide a text message service to our VIP clients with useful stock-related information. It's not a spam message but it's information from a reliable source."

"I will take it into account."

Gun-Ho couldn't harshly decline the branch manager's kind offer, so he just told him that he would consider it. While he was walking out of the stockbroking firm, Gun-Ho thought of his past experience with the same firm.

"When I placed my 10 million won that I borrowed from the sunshine loan program to the firm years ago, they didn't care about me at all. Now, even the branch manager greeted me and served me a cup of tea in his office. As my mom said, a person should live a long life to see various and unexpected things in life."

Gun-Ho stopped by a massage shop in Suwon after having his lunch in a

Japanese restaurant. He felt sleepy while he was getting foot massages, probably because he just had his lunch.

"At this hour, the factory workers in the factory I used to work at must be working so hard. Money is good."

Gun-Ho received a call from the consulting company.

"I talked with the TowerPalace condo owner, and he agreed to move out if you pay 5 million won for the moving cost."

"That's good. Thank you for your work."

Gun-Ho told Manager Oh that he would send him the 5 million won moving expense for the current occupant in addition to the consultation fee.

Fifteen days later, Gun-Ho received the keys for the condo from Manager Oh. Manager Oh also handed the receipts of the last HOA payment and gas service payment paid by the previous owner.

"5 million won is not a bad deal at all. I believe I handled it very well. If someone else talked with the previous owner, he wouldn't agree to the price."

Manager Oh, still wearing his sports cap and chewing his gum, said to Gun-Ho.

"I know you would make it work. Thank you for your great work."

Gun-Ho extended his hand for a handshake.

"If you need my help any time in the future, just let me know. I will do my best for you."

Manager Oh gave Gun-Ho a military salute in a comical gesture.

"Hahaha. I will definitely do so. Thank you again."

Gun-Ho went to his TowerPalace condo that evening.

"There are a lot of luxurious cars parked here."

When Gun-Ho opened the condo door, a huge vacant space met his eyes.

"50 pyung is indeed large. The vacant space makes it look even larger."

Gun-Ho thought he would have to do the wallpaper since someone had been living here for several years and left some normal wear and tear on the wall.

"I will have to do the wallpaper and renovate the bathroom."

The next day, Gun-Ho asked a remodeling contractor to come to his condo.

"I want to change the wallpaper and renovate this bathroom."

"Is there any particular wallpaper you like?"

The contractor asked while laying out wallpaper samples he brought on the floor.

"Hmm, it's hard to choose; there are so many of them. I just want something bright."

"What about this one then? This one is popular among young female homeowners these days."

"Umm, okay. Let's do that then."

The remodeling contractor checked each room of the condo.

"Sir, why don't you renovate the kitchen too?"

"The kitchen looks okay as it is."

"Sir, once you change the wallpaper, the kitchen will look dingy. You don't want that in a luxurious condo like this one. I can get you a good price. You should change the ceiling lights as well. There are so many well-designed ceiling lights out there. You need to replace them all. All these updates will change the price of the condo."

Once Gun-Ho heard the change of the condo's price, he decided to update the condo as the remodeling contractor suggested.

After the condo renovation was completed, Gun-Ho went to the condo.

"Oh, gosh. Money is good. The renovation was worth every penny. They made

the condo as if it was a brand new condo. They are certainly good at what they do."

Gun-Ho started filling the condo with necessary furniture and home appliances. He bought a sofa, a dining set, a refrigerator, a washer, etc. They were all luxurious and expensive. Gun-Ho also bought a luxurious high-end designer bed frame, a wooden desk, and a bookshelf.

"This condo is too big for me; however, after three years I expect its price to go up by 100 million won. That means I would make over 30 million every year just by living here."

Gun-Ho finally moved to Gangnam; his long-lasting dream came true. He liked the fact that he didn't go through a realtor to purchase a real property but bought it instead through an auction at a low price. Gun-Ho now wanted to buy a car.

"Should I buy a BMW? Since I go fishing sometimes, maybe I should by an SUV. Let's get a Land Rover."

Gun-Ho purchased a Land Rover Discovery for 100 million won.

"Let me see how much I have spent for the TowerPalace condo, the condo in Guweol Town, the Land Rover, and the condo renovation."

Gun-Ho calculated how much he spent so far.

"It's a little over 2 billion won. I can recover the money I spent on buying the condo later once I resell it, so it's okay. The cash that I have available now is a bit more than 17.7 billion won. Let's take out some of it and start looking for a business I can run."

Gun-Ho's day in Gangnam started with waking up in the morning in a luxurious 50 pyung large condo in the TowerPalace community. He then went to a fitness center in his Land Rover and after working out there, he stopped by a café inside the Education Community Center building in Yangjae Town. When he was enjoying his coffee in this café as usual, he received a call from his friend—Min-Hyeok whom he ran across in front of the National Assembly Library of Korea the other day.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok. How have you been? Did you pass the government job

exam?"

"No. I think I am not smart enough."

"Come on, cheer up! I heard many people passed the exam after several attempts."

"What about you, Gun-Ho? What are you doing these days? You are still in Yeongdeungpo, right?"

"No, I moved to another town."

Gun-Ho decided not to tell him that he was living in a TowerPalace condo after considering telling him for a second.

"Oh, really? I was going to ask you if you would like to have soju with me if you're in Yeongdeunpo because I took a position of a residential manager in a OneRoom in Yeongdeungpo, so I can continue to study for the exam while making some money."

"I will buy you a soju."

"I have to stay in this area close to the OneRoom that I am working at as a residential manager. I can't lose this job now. The same position at a luxurious OneRoom in Gangnam is extremely competitive."

"I see."

"If you happen to be in the area, just let me know, okay?"

"Yeah, I will. Thank you for calling me, friend."

"OneRoom..."

Gun-Ho thought of his old days in a OneRoom. He used to live in one of those when he studied for the level-9 government job exam.

"There was no window in my room. It was tiny, and that room didn't have a private bathroom either. Those days were indeed painful."

Gun-Ho didn't even want to think of those days; he shook his head as if he

wanted to shake off the memory, but he went on.

"I kept failing the exam, and I had to save money. So, I ate cooked rice and kimchi for every meal in a day because they were free; the OneRoom provided cooked rice and kimchi for its residents for free. I don't want to go back to that life ever again."

Gun-Ho felt sorry for Min-Hyeok.

"Min-Hyeok is the same age as me, 36 years old since New Year's Day already passed. If he could pass the level-9 government job exam, he would start making about 2 million won per month. I'm not sure if he could plan his future—marrying someone and buying a house—with that salary."

Gun-Ho recalled his time with Min-Hyeok when they were still in junior high school together.

"He was a good friend. He must be having a difficult life now. His father used to drive a bus, but he's probably retired already. Whew."

85 Moving to Gangnam 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho reminisced about his childhood while having his coffee.

"When I lived in Juan, Bupyeong District if one of my classmates lived in a condo that was worth 300 million, everyone in the class would be envious of him. Probably that is still true nowadays. I still don't understand why we all were so sensitive about who was poor and who was rich. If one has a poor family, he would often be bullied. In that sort of environment, how would I have had a good life during my childhood?"

Gun-Ho thought of his current self.

"Now I live in a condo that is 50 pyung large and located in Gangnam. I drive a luxurious car, and I go to a fitness center to work out. For people from my childhood, my current life would be something they are still dreaming about."

Gun-Ho pondered over the meaning of money.

He recalled the popular saying of Chinese people that he heard when he was in China,

"Money can control even ghosts."

Chinese people loved money. They placed a statue of the god of wealth at their house' entrance, and whenever they went out of and came in their house, they prayed with their hands pressed together to the god.

There was a saying in the Western world, "Money talks everything."

It was money that talked, not a person. Money also represented the person with the money. Without money, a person was considered as having low value and a shallow philosophy of life while a person who had lots of money was considered elegant and highly respected.

Mencius in the Spring and Autumn period in Chinese history said this.

"Poverty takes down manners."

It sounded like without money a person was considered as rude while with money a person was considered as polite.

Gun-Ho was still hungry for money.

Gu Kim, a respected politician during the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea stated that the thing he wanted to have the most was 'the highest culture.' The most wanted thing for Gun-Ho was money. He wanted it more and more.

Gun-Ho still wanted a job or a business that would generate income and that would cover his living expenses.

"Should I invest 5% of the 17.7 billion won that I have?"

After giving thought to it, Gun-Ho was leaning toward the OneRoom business idea, where Min-Hyeok was working at.

"OneRoom could be dingy. Maybe I should get a OneRoomTel instead, that is clean and luxurious, the one close to my home in Gangnam."

Gun-Ho remembered that he saw a OneRoomTel for sale on the Internet that was located in Gangnam and cost about 300 million won.

"I am loaded with cash. Should I get three of those? If I do, I would have to pay high individual income tax. Maybe I should open a company that would operate OneRoomTels."

Gun-Ho was aware that the owner of the factories, which he had worked at before, established a company and ran the factory through that company once their annual sales exceeded 100 million won.

"If I open a company and run three OneRoomTels through it, I can place the cost of my Land Rover's maintenance and fitness center membership fee under the company's name."

Gun-Ho used to work in accounting at YS Tech in Asan, Chungnam Province. At that time he sometimes visited a certified legal consultant's office when there were some changes in the structure of management of the company. Then the certified legal consultant's office took care of it and charged a fee for the work.

"Let's establish a company."

Gun-Ho wanted to open a company and get a business card with a position title of CEO.

"The tax bracket for my company would not be high; it should be about 20% for the business income. I can classify my salary and some petty money I would use as a company expense. Moreover, I would look better if I'm going to run a business rather than just hanging around in a fitness center because I didn't have to make money. I will have a business card that says CEO, which would be really nice. Okay, let's open a company."

Gun-Ho decided to visit a certified legal consultant's office nearby and form a company.

"How much capital should I invest?"

Gun-Ho decided to invest 300 million won initially.

"I will need about 1 billion won to acquire three OneRoomTels. It exceeds the initial investment of 300 million won. Let's make the remaining necessary funds I would use to buy the OneRoomTels a loan to the company."

Gun-Ho now had to decide the name of his company. Even after giving some thought to it, Gun-Ho couldn't come up with a good one.

"Should I ask Master Park for the name? It seems that he makes names for a newborn baby as well. Nah... he is an old man. He won't be able to think of a sophisticated name."

Gun-Ho received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro. I got promoted. I am a manager now."

"Oh, wow. Congratulations."

"Bro, did you buy anything at the auction yet?"

"I did."

"What did you buy?"

"I bought a TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town."

"TowerPalace? Isn't it the expensive condo where only rich people are living in? You have money for that?"

"You don't use only your money at an auction."

"Wow, you are doing well, bro. Are you going to sell it then?"

"I will eventually have to sell it, but I am not rushing."

"Why not?"

"I'm going to form a company first."

"A company? Whoa, bro, you are doing really well."

"I want to open a business entity that operates OneRoomTels, and also sells and buys properties at auction. Do you have any good name I can use for the company?"

"Umm..., what about GH Development?"

"GH Development Company?"

"Yeah, that's your initials. Just use your name, bro."

"Hmm, that's a good idea."

Gun-Ho decided to open a company with the name of 'GH Development Company.'

Gun-Ho searched on the Internet what he had to prepare in order to form a company.

"I will need articles of corporation, a director or an internal auditor."

Gun-Ho was thinking who would be a good candidate for the director or internal auditor position.

"Should I ask Jong-Suk? I need to get his certificate of a registered seal and the formal consent of taking the position too. Will it not cause any problem later?"

Gun-Ho thought of the people around him.

"What about Suk-Ho or Min-Hyeok?"

Gun-Ho couldn't trust them.

"What about my sister or brother-in-law?"

That could cause a problem later too.

"Maybe my father."

Gun-Ho thought his father would be a good candidate because he could trust him, and he knew his father wouldn't be interested in participating in managing the company. However, he was not sure if a family member could take the position. Gun-Ho called a certified legal consultant's office.

"Father is okay."

Gun-Ho was ready to establish a company—GH Development Company with 300 million capital. He would appoint his father and himself as directors. For the company's office, he purchased an office-tel close to the Gangnam Station. It was not a small office-tel like the one in Yeongdeungpo District that he used to live, but it was a 30 pyung large office-tel with two rooms.

"The office-tel is purchased under my name, and the company will rent it from me."

Gun-Ho called his father in Incheon.

"Dad, I need a copy of your resident registration and certificate of a registered seal."

"Why do you need them?"

"I am going to open a company—GH Development."

"GH what?"

"Dad, I am opening a company, and you will be listed as a director of that company. I will be the CEO."

"You are opening a company? Oh, really? What kind of company?"

"It's a real estate development company. I will do real estate leasing as well."

"That sounds like it will cost a lot of money to run. I don't know. You do what you have to do, son. I will prepare the documents by tomorrow."

Gun-Ho went to a certified legal consultant's office in Seocho Town to request the company formation. After handing them the business name, business address, bank statements, the directors' certificate of a registered seal and registered stamp, they told Gun-Ho that they would contact him once all the work was completed.

Gun-Ho purchased a fax machine, a computer and two more desks for his office-tel even though he didn't have any staff yet; he just bought those things to fill the space. He also had an Internet connection.

"Let's hang the business sign."

Gun-Ho put an acrylic sign on the office door; it said 'GH Development Company.' This office-tel building had only large office-tels and maybe that was why most of the office-tels were used as an office rather than a residential unit. Gun-Ho looked at the other office's sign. The office on Gun-Ho's right had an office sign—'Real Estate Development,' and on the left side was some sort of a design company.

86 Starting a Company 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho's request to establish a company had been approved.

As instructed by the certified legal consultant's office, Gun-Ho brought all the documents necessary in order to register his company to the tax office such as the certificate of business formation, the articles of incorporation, the share certificates, and the lease agreement for the office.

"Is the office-tel owner the same person as the company CEO?"

"Correct. The company will lease the office-tel from an individual, which is owned by myself."

"I see."

The tax office staff quickly registered Gun-Ho's new company.

"It was very quick."

Before coming back to his home, Gun-Ho placed an order for his business card with his job title—CEO after verifying the design of the card displayed on the computer screen, and also had the company stamp made, that would be registered later.

"Even a small tiny deli that is newly opened gets congratulatory flowers and stuff. Should I tell everyone that I opened a company? Nah, let's not. I don't do that kind of stuff."

Everything was ready for Gun-Ho to run the company.

"I received my business card and business registration. The Internet and fax are working now. So, everything is all set. I just need a business item."

Gun-Ho took a nap in his comfy executive office chair. Gun-Ho's office looked really nice; Gun-Ho spent some money on decorating his office.

Gun-Ho finally purchased a OneRoomTel in Seocho Town under the company's

name. It was 320 million won.

"This OneRoomTel has 50 rooms with a shower facility, fire-fighting system, and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning). And it's clean."

The rent for a room here was 400,000 won per month. Most residents were office workers working in the vicinity of the OneRoomTel. Gun-Ho was told there was no person like a derelict living in the building, who was often found in a cheap OneRoom.

The current owner was a retired government worker.

"Most of the rooms here are already occupied. The current occupancy rate is 90%. This OneRoomTel is popular among office workers who have to stay in the area because of their work and if their home is in a province. It is preferable compared to other OneRoomTels in the area because of good amenities."

Gun-Ho started calculating.

'The monthly rent per room is 400,000 won. There are 50 rooms, so the monthly income would be 20 million won if fully rented out. Currently, 90% of the rooms are occupied, so that would be 90% of 20 million won which is 18 million won. If I subtract my rent and the pay to the residential manager and other expenses, I would make about 13 million won. Assuming the owner exaggerated a bit about the occupancy rate then I would probably make at least 10 million won per month.'

Guessing that Gun-Ho was calculating the expected monthly income from this OneRoomTel, the owner tried to be chatty.

"I used to have 100% occupancy rate here before when there were many female workers living in this area who worked at a bar during night time."

"Female workers working in a bar?"

"Yes. There used to be a lot of those people in this area, but not anymore though because of the crackdown on those types of business. But still, this OneRoomTel has very high occupancy rate. You can ask the residential manager."

Gun-Ho talked with the residential manager.

He was a second-year law school student; he looked about five years younger than Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was actually considering asking Min-Hyeok to work with him at the OneRoomTel, but he now thought that maybe he should keep the same residential manager who had already been working here.

"Where did you go to college?"

"A national university in a province."

"Hmm, I can't come here often so please take good care of the business."

Gun-Ho gave his business card to the residential manager. The residential manager humbly took his card with his two hands.

Gun-Ho kept searching on the Internet to buy another OneRoomTel.

"Once I acquire three OneRoomTels, I'd better hire a worker who can manage the OneRoomTel business. I shouldn't waste my time visiting the OneRoomTels regularly and taking care of tedious matter there. I'd better spend my time looking for another good business opportunity. I can bear the cost of hiring one or two workers."

Gun-Ho posted a job advertisement for two positions on WorkNet: one for a position related to real estate, and the other one was for someone who could handle bookkeeping and the Four Major Public Insurance. He didn't add any requirement on age, academic degree, gender or work experience.

After the due date for submitting the applications, Gun-Ho checked the resumes he received through his email, and he was surprised by the number of applications he received.

"Wow, all these people want to work here."

The economy was truly not doing well. There were over 50 resumes that arrived at Gun-Ho's email inbox.

Gun-Ho at first reviewed the applications for the real estate related position. Most of the applicants had a real estate license with work experience in real estate planning and development, or real estate sales.

"I prefer to work with someone who's earnest and has no ethical issue, rather than someone who has extensive work experience in the field."

Gun-Ho selected one applicant for an interview. That applicant used to work in a bank as a deputy general manager, and he then opened his own realtor's office after obtaining the realtor license.

"He retired at the age of 48 which seemed to be a bit early. It has been a year since he opened his realtor's office. That means he is not doing anything now. He looks nice in the picture."

Gun-Ho sent a text message to him inviting him for an interview.

As to the bookkeeping position, one candidate, who had one-year of work experience in bookkeeping and handling the Four Major Public Insurance at an exam preparatory private institution, drew Gun-Ho's attention.

"I might think differently if I see this candidate in person, but she looks nice and stable in the picture. She is living in Bongcheon Town which is a good distance to commute to my office. She can take the subway line 2 and get off at Gangnam Station; it's a convenient ride. She is 27 years old, but she wouldn't probably marry soon since these days people tend to marry at a later age. She has a certificate of computerized accounting with several computer-related certificates. Oh, she listed an award she received from high school." Gun-Ho chuckled.

It was the interview day. Gun-Ho planned to have an interview with the candidate for the real estate position first, and on the following day, he would meet with the bookkeeper position candidate for her interview.

The candidate who used to work in a bank arrived for an interview.

"I see that you used to work in a bank as a deputy general manager. Did you retire from banking work or quit the job because of your business?"

"I retired."

"Did you open the realtor's office right after you retired?"

"Correct."

"And, it didn't work out?"

"I actually obtained my realtor license when I was still working in the bank. I thought I wouldn't have any problem making money after my retirement since I had the realtor's license. But that was not the case. I eventually closed my realtor's office after paying the office rent for two years without making any money."

"So, after you closed the realtor's office, you didn't get another job?"

"I tried to get a job, but I couldn't find any office work. If you give me an opportunity to work here, I would work hard and do my best."

"How many family members do you have if you don't mind me asking?"

"I am married, and I have a daughter who is a senior in high school."

"As you already know, this is a startup company; I just opened it. So, I can't pay you much now. How much do you require working here?"

"I will be fine with about 2 million won per month."

"Hmm, you seem to be a very nice person, and you have many computer related certificates as well. I will have to think about it and will let you know about my decision through a text message."

"Thank you, sir, for your time."

The candidate gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho before he left the office.

The next day, a female candidate came to Gun-Ho's office for an interview for the bookkeeper position.

"Is this GH Development?"

"Yes, it is."

"I am here for an interview."

The lady handed papers to Gun-Ho after pulling them out from a large envelope she carried.

"What is this?"

"These are copies of my various certificates."

"They are a lot. Please have a seat."

"What kind of software application did you use when you worked in accounting at the exam preparatory institution?"

"I didn't use any accounting program there. It was a small private institution."

Her response reminded Gun-Ho of his old days working at Bangil Gas. He worked in accounting at that time, but all the work was done manually. That company was small as well.

"Hmm, have you handled the Four Major Public Insurance?"

"Yes, I am actually very good at that work."

"How much did you get paid at your previous work?"

"My monthly pay was 1.8 million won. I worked five days a week and also worked every Saturdays."

"From your home in Bongcheon Town, you only need to take the subway once, right?"

"Right. It's very convenient to commute for me."

The lady smiled broadly. Gun-Ho liked her smile.

"By the way, what kind of business does this company do?"

"We do various things such as OneRoomTel leasing service and real estate auction."

"Oh, I see. Are there... many people applying for the job?"

"Yes, there are quite a lot."

The female applicant looked worried when Gun-Ho told her there were many

applicants for the same position.

"Okay, thank you for coming. I will let you know through a text message."

The applicant gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho and walked out of the office quietly.

Gun-Ho decided to hire both candidates: the one who used to work in a bank and this female candidate.

87 Starting a Company 1 – PART 2

It was the first day of work for Gun-Ho's new employees.

The name of the man who used to work in a bank, and who would work in the real estate planning and development was Seong-Il Kang; the female bookkeeper's name was Ji-Young Jeong.

Gun-Ho decided to give Seong-Il a job title of manager with a monthly salary of 2.2 million won.

"Your pay will gradually increase as you work hard."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho decided to pay 1.85 million for the female bookkeeper.

"Same rules apply to you, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong. Your pay will increase as you work hard."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho's office looked like a real company once three people were sitting at their desk and working.

"I love my desk and computer."

Ji-Young seemed to be excited about working at a new desk with a new computer.

"Could you file the Four Major Public Insurance for three of us here? Also, here is the Shinhan Bank bankbook; you can use the funds there for the operating expenses. Take this OTP card as well. Please apply for the Internet Banking Service Certificate. I will keep the major bank bankbook with me."

Ji-Young already placed a copy of business registration under the glass top of her desk. She definitely had work experience in the field.

"I have the major bank business card with me, so if you need to use a large amount of money, just let me know."

"Okay."

"This business card from Shinhan Bank has a balance of only 500,000 won. I will buy office supplies with it, such as A4 copy papers, cash payment recording forms, etc. I will also get us coffee."

"Sounds good."

Seong-Il who was listening to the conversation between Gun-Ho and Ji-Young asked,

"What should I do?"

"You need to come with me, Manager Kang. We have a OneRoomTel that was acquired under the company's name around here, let me show you where, and then you can visit the other OneRoomTels nearby that came on the market for sale."

"Whew," Manager Kang sighed.

"What's the matter?"

"I knew this company does real estate planning and development and operates a few OneRoomTels. So I believed it is a financially strong company. I will work hard, sir."

Gun-Ho took Manager Kang to the OneRoomTel in Seocho Town.

The residential manager was taking a nap at the counter and woke up in surprise when Gun-Ho and Manager Kang entered the OneRoomTel.

"You must be very tired."

The residential manager scratched his head in embarrassment.

"This is Manager Kang from our company. He will come by here once a day. If you have any questions or concerns, you can talk to him."

"Okay. And here is..."

"What is this?"

"We have a new resident from yesterday. This is his one month rent in cash, 400,000 won. He didn't use his credit card."

"Please deposit it to the company's bank account."

"And..., we need to buy trash bags."

"Get the trash bags, keep the receipt, and give it to Manager Kang next time when he visits here"

"Okay, I will do that."

Gun-Ho then came back to the office with Manager Kang.

"Manager Kang, after lunch, why don't you go visit other OneRoomTels on the market? Since you have to go to the OneRoomTel to manage it every day, start from the area close to our office; Seocho District and Gangnam District would be good. Also, I saw two OneRoomTels on the market; one in Yangjae Town and one in Yeoksam Town. Please go see those too."

"What's the price range that we're looking for?"

"I won't set a limit on price. As long as it is a good property, we will take it."

"Okay. I had bought a OneRoomTel for one of my clients before when I had my realtor's office, so I know what to look for."

"Oh, really? I'm counting on you then."

Gun-Ho, Manager Kang and Jin-Young walked out of the office for lunch. They went to a restaurant close to the office. It was crowded since it was lunchtime.

They ordered a seafood soup.

"Since this is our first day, let's eat together. However, from tomorrow we might not be able to get together every lunch, so I will provide the lunch pay—120,000 won per month. You can take the amount from the bank account where the

monthly rent of the OneRoomTel is deposited."

"Thank you."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young looked satisfied as this was their first job in a long time.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, did you bring the Shinhan Bank business card?"

"Yes."

"Then pay for lunch with it today."

"Okay, sir."

Since two employees joined the company, Gun-Ho felt relaxed; it was comfortable and convenient.

Gun-Ho's daily routine was now reading a daily newspaper and an economic newspaper in the morning, and then he went to a fitness center in the afternoon. Manager Kang stayed in the office in the morning and went out in the afternoon to visit OneRoomTels placed on the market for sale.

"You don't have to rush, Manager Kang. When you see a good OneRoomTel, find one with good resale value. Also, check if it has a proper fire-fighting system."

"Okay, I will keep that in mind."

Gun-Ho felt good when he came to the office in the morning. Ji-Young always kept the office clean and organized. She already made friends with other female workers next door—the design company. Gun-Ho saw her having fun talking and laughing with the neighbor female workers. She also seemed to be having lunch with them all the time.

Manager Kang gave a report to Gun-Ho on the OneRoomTels he visited so far.

"Hmm, you made a chart for it. You already visited five OneRoomTels?"

"Yes, I've taken pictures of the inside and outside of those OneRoomTels as

well."

"Did you find a good one?"

"The one in Yangjae Town is too old and shabby, but the Bangbae Town OneRoomTel seemed to be a good one. It came on the market for a quick sale so the price is low enough, and it was recently renovated."

"How much do they ask?"

"They were asking 300 million, and I negotiated down to 280 million won. Why don't we go see it tomorrow?"

"Anything else?"

"There is another good one in Daechi Town. That one is mostly occupied by office workers working in either Samsung Town or Teheran Road, rather than students."

"Okay, let's visit the one in Bangbae Town and the one in Daechi Town tomorrow."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho called for Ji-Young.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, here is my business card. Place an order for a business card for yourself and Manager Kang with the same design."

Ji-Young stared at the business card for quite a while before saying something,

"Umm... Sir, is it okay if I pick a new design?"

"Why? Is this not good?"

"Yes, a little..."

"Haha, do what you want to do with it."

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang walked out of the office to see the OneRoomTels that Manager Kang recommended.

"Manager Kang, why don't you wait for me at the office-tel's main entrance? I will bring my car there; it's in the underground parking lot."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho brought his Land Rover Discovery to the main entrance, and Manager Kang seemed to be surprised to see an expensive car.

"Let's go to Bangbae Town first."

"Sir, this car is very expensive, isn't it?"

"Yes, I paid about 100 million won for it."

"Whoa! 100 million!"

Gun-Ho liked the OneRoomTel in Bangbae Town, and he made a purchase and sales contract for it under the company name.

The seller was an overweight woman in her 50s.

"We didn't use residential managers in running this OneRoomTel. My husband and I directly operated it. So, you probably want to look for a residential manager because someone has to manage the residents and clean the trash and etc."

"Manager Kang, why don't you look for a residential manager? Oh, hold on. I might have someone for the position."

Gun-Ho thought of Min-Hyeok he ran across in front of the National Assembly Library the other day.

He made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"Hey, it's me, Gun-Ho."

"Hey, Gun-Ho! Good to hear from you, but I am not in Yeongdeungpo any longer. I quit the residential manager position after having a bad argument with the owner."

"Oh, really?"

"I couldn't stand his constant nagging on every small thing. Moreover, weird old men and perverts were living there since it was a cheap OneRoom. I am currently with my parents in Incheon. This is another kind of hell, man."

"Are you still interested in a residential manager position in OneRoomTel?"

"I am of course, but I haven't seen any opening position lately."

"I know one. It's located in Bangbae Town. Why don't you come to the Bangbae subway station by noon tomorrow?"

"Are you serious? I will, I will be there. Thank you, man."

88 Starting a Company 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho went to Daechi Town accompanied by Manager Kang to visit the OneRoomTel that Manager Kang recommended earlier.

"Hmm, it's clean. But there are many rooms that are still vacant, maybe because it was opened not long ago."

"Actually it was opened two months ago and back on the market for sale again."

"Two months? Why would the owner put it back on the market that quick? Is the owner a professional flipper who purchases a real property at a discounted price and quickly resells it at a higher price after fixing and renovating a few things?"

"Haha, if that was the case I wouldn't have taken the work selling it on behalf of the owner. The owner is actually a high-ranking government official's wife. Her husband disapproved of her doing business like this."

"I see."

The owner came to the OneRoomTel to make the sales contract. The owner was a female who looked like in her late 40s; she was wearing glasses.

"I talked with Manager Kang yesterday and agreed to the price of 260 million won; however, that is way too low. I spent tons of money on renovating this OneRoomTel. I feel like I am losing too much money here."

Manager Kang became chatty.

"You are making money by selling it when there is someone who wants to buy it. Ma'am, let's make the contract now."

"I will sign on the contract at the realtor's office across the street."

The lady owner sounded cold. In responding to the lady's grievance, Gun-Ho suggested slowly.

"I will pay for your realtor fee since you are not very happy in selling the

property."

The lady looked over her glasses at Gun-Ho and smiled slightly.

After returning to his office, Gun-Ho did the math.

"I spent 320 million won in acquiring the OneRoomTel in Seocho Town, and another 280 million won for the one in Bangbae Town. The OneRoomTel in Daechi cost me an additional 260 million won. So I spent a total of 860 million won and acquire three OneRoomTels so far."

Gun-Ho asked for Ji-Young.

"We incurred 860 million won in acquiring three OneRoomTels. Our company's capital is 300 million won. For the source of the 560 million won, just record it as a fund that came from the company CEO."

"Okay, I will do that."

"I will get you an accounting software and install it on your computer so you could use it. I already placed an order. Do you think you can handle it?"

"I learned it from an accounting private institution, but I haven't actually used one yet. I think I can learn quickly though."

"If you have any question while you are using the software, you can ask the tax accountant office we work with, or you can ask me if the question is a simple one."

"Huh? You, sir?"

"It had been quite a while, but I've done accounting work for a manufacturing company before. I used one of their accounting programs as well, of course."

"Oh, I see. Okay."

Manager Kang and the bookkeeper, Ji-Young was talking about Gun-Ho while Gun-Ho was not in the office and was going to the bathroom.

"Did you see his car? I saw his car yesterday. He is riding a Land Rover that is

over 100 million won."

"I think our CEO is rich. I saw his residential address while making a file for the Four Major Public Insurance. He is living in a TowerPalace condo. I heard a condo there costs over 2 billion won."

"TowerPalace? Wow, he is probably very rich. His parents must be quite wealthy."

They stopped the conversation when Gun-Ho returned to the office.

"Oh, sir, I just received our new business card."

"That was quick. Oh, I like the new design. I see a colorful logo there."

"It's our company, GH Development's logo which geometricized the initials—GH."

"Oh, that's right. I see the letters, GH. Wow, it looks like a big company's business card. So did you design all this? Maybe your friend in the design company helped you?"

"Yes, I designed it, and my friend modified it a little."

Ji-Young smiled as she explained.

"Hmm, I appreciate your friend's help. Why don't you buy her lunch? Use our business credit card and treat her lunch."

"Thank you."

Ji-Young handed the business card to Manager Kang as well. Manager Kang seemed to be excited about having his own business card.

Gun-Ho went to Bangbae Town with Manager Kang to meet Min-Hyeok.

Min-Hyeok was looking at his cell phone while standing at the subway station. He was wearing a shabby jacket.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok. Good to see you."

"Oh, Gun-Ho."

Min-Hyeok glanced at Manager Kang and looked at Gun-Ho as if he was asking who this guy was without saying anything.

"This is Manager Kang. He's the one managing the OneRoomTel where you will be working at."

"Oh, then is he the owner?"

"No, he is not the owner, but he is managing it. The OneRoomTel is owned by a company."

Manager Kang gave his business card to Min-Hyeok. Gun-Ho also handed his business card to Min-Hyeok. Min-Hyeok seemed to be surprised by looking at Gun-Ho's business card. It said Gun-Ho was a CEO and Manager Kang was working for the same company as a manager.

"Get in. I brought a car today. Let's go have lunch together."

Min-Hyeok was stunned. The car Gun-Ho brought was an expensive foreign-made car. Min-Hyeok was lost for words.

"I know you have been under a lot of stress because of the exam. Let's go have pork. I know a good place that makes tasty Sooyook*."

Once Min-Hyeok looked around the OneRoomTel in Bangbae Town, he seemed to be satisfied.

"Whoa, the OneRoomTel in Gangnam District is really good."

"Manager Kang here will come by the OneRoomTel maybe once or twice per week. However, you will be the one who'll actually manage this OneRoomTel. There is no resident who would make any trouble here so you should be good. There are only 45 rooms so you won't have heavy traffic either. The place will be quiet and clean. You just need to take out trash bags in the morning, prepare cooked rice and kimchi for the residents, and clean the building from time to time. The work won't disturb your studies that much."

"Thank you, Gun-Ho for everything."

Manager Kang showed Min-Hyeok where to toss out a trash bag and how to use the credit card processing device. Manager Kang added while handing a business card of a Kimchi producing company to Min-Hyeok.

"Your monthly salary will be 800,000 won. You can purchase rice at the supermarket across the street. For Kimchi, you can call the number on this business card and place an order; they will deliver it here."

"Thank you."

Min-Hyeok bowed deeply low to Manager Kang.

"Min-Hyeok, we are leaving now. Good luck."

Gun-Ho walked out of the OneRoomTel after patting Min-Hyeok's back. Min-Hyeok had mixed feelings and felt confused. He, of course, was grateful to Gun-Ho for getting him a job, but Gun-Ho looked like a totally different person.

Gun-Ho's company was now operating three OneRoomTels. Money was coming in on a daily basis from those three OneRoomTels; sometimes it was over 2 million won and sometimes it was only 400,000 won. Usually, they were getting about 1.5 million won on average.

The bookkeeper, Ji-Young verified the company account every morning.

"Sir, we have received over 10 million won so far. What do you want me to do with it? Do you want me to transfer it to the major company bank account with Kookmin Bank that you are holding?"

"Make payments to each residential manager first at the OneRoomTels and also pay the rent. Once you send the payments, print out the statements and attach them to the cash payment record and make a report to me."

"I will do that."

Ji-Young printed out all the transaction statements for incoming and outgoing and attach them to the transaction record and report to Gun-Ho every day. There were not much to report since the company was not doing many transactions yet, it was about in the range from three to twenty pages. Ji-Young and Manager Kang put the report inside a folder and handed it to Gun-Ho respectfully. Gun-

Ho usually signed on it without raising any problem.

"Umm, sir, I will have to pay the wage next week for Manager Kang and myself. How much should I do for your wage?"

"Me? Hmmm.., let me see... Since the company is still small, let's make it 4 million won."

"Are you sure, sir?"

"Yes, that's fine. And don't forget to pay rent for this office-tel. I, personally, purchased this office-tel for 500 million won. I, as an individual, leased this office-tel to GH Development. So please send the rent to my personal bank account."

"How much should I send?"

"Hmm... 2 million won per month will be good."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho received 6 million won to his personal bank account every month: 4 million for his wage and 2 million for the office-tel rent. He listed any cost incurred for his automobile and meals under the company's expenses.

Note*

Sooyook – boiled pork meat.

89 Starting a Company 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho verified his available cash.

"I have 16.4 billion won left. I started from 19.8 billion won that I made from the stocks related to the Four Major Rivers Project. I purchased two condos and an automobile, formed a company, and acquired three OneRoomTels. They cost me about 3.4 billion won."

As soon as Gun-Ho found out that the branch manager of the stockbroking company in Suwon moved to another branch, he moved his stock account to the branch in Gangnam. He put 6.4 billion won in his personal bank account and left the remaining 10 billion won in his stock account.

Even in Gangnam District where there were many rich people residing in, the cash amount of 10 billion seemed to be significant. When Gun-Ho visited the Gangnam branch office of the stockbroking firm in order to move his account there, the branch manager of Gangnam office ran to Gun-Ho and took him to his office.

The staff in that branch was whispering.

"Do you know the man who just entered the branch manager's office?"

"It looks like someone with substantial funds came to open an account with us."

"But he looked young."

When the branch manager in Gangnam handed his business card to Gun-Ho, Gun-Ho also gave his business card to him.

"You are the CEO of GH Development. Probably a real estate development, I suppose?"

"Haha, that's right."

The branch manager of the Gangnam office told Gun-Ho exactly the same thing as the branch manager in the Suwon office did.

"We provide a text message service to our VIP clients only."

A pretty lady staff entered the office with coffee.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, do you play golf?"

"I don't."

"According to your business card, your GH Development office is around here. Would you like to join me and play a round?"

"Haha, I don't know. I will have to leave now. I have something I have to take care of."

The branch manager walked Gun-Ho out to the main entrance and gave him a 90-degree bow.

Gun-Ho started receiving a text message from the stockbroking company about information related to stocks every day. The message was usually about the stock market trend and stock recommendation. They didn't forget to add their reasons for the recommendation.

"The stocks they recommend are all blue-chip stocks. An investor with only several ten million won wouldn't make money by investing in this type of stock."

The stock brokerage firm didn't recommend stocks that were too risky to invest in such as stocks that were being manipulated or stocks that were being influenced by politics. They only recommended blue-chip stocks that had stable earnings.

"The stockbroking firm doesn't want to be blamed in the future by recommending a risky stock."

Gun-Ho invested 3 billion won in the stocks that the stock brokerage firm recommended.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from the president of the auction private institution.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? How are you?"

"Oh, sir, how have you been?"

"I'm calling to invite you for a gathering. I'm inviting everyone who graduated from my auction school."

"Oh, really?"

"There are about 20 graduates, but since many of them are busy and live too far from here in a province, I guess about 10 graduates will be able to attend. I really hope that you could come to the gathering."

"When is it going to happen?"

"It will be next Friday in the afternoon at Namyeong Town, Yongsan. I will send you a text with the address and time."

"Okay. I will be there unless something comes up."

Gun-Ho went to the gathering for the auction course graduates on Friday. It was held at a Galbi-tang* restaurant. There were 11 graduates attending the gathering. Half of those people were licensed realtors.

Gun-Ho said hi to everyone. Some looked familiar and some looked like he had never seen before. The president gave a speech.

"Umm, I asked you all to come to the gathering hoping that you could get to know each other and share information about the auction."

People clapped and poured soju to each other's glass. People there started sharing various information.

"I almost bought a townhouse apartment in Jeongreung Town, and I had to give up when I realized there were so many tenants living there."

"There are several ways you could evict them."

"I tried to buy a commercial building once, and then I gave up because it was too expensive for me. It was 500 million won. I was thinking of buying it with a business partner or something."

"I earned a consultation fee by guiding two persons at an auction."

The place was filled with the clamor of people who were talking about their experiences related to the auction. The president of the institution clapped to make them quiet.

"Attention here. Mr. Gun-Ho Goo sitting next to me, he bought a TowerPalace condo at an auction."

"TowerPalace?"

People looked at Gun-Ho all together.

"TowerPalace is located in a very popular area. Its appraised value was 1.8 billion won, and he bought it for 1.5 billion won at the auction. Its current market price is 1.9 billion won. Let's give him a big round of applause for his successful auction experience."

"Whoa, 1.9 billion won! That's awesome."

People clapped. Gun-Ho stood up and thanked them.

"Are you living there?"

"Yes, I live there. I didn't buy it for investment purposes. I bought it to live there."

"Oh, I see."

What Gun-Ho said implied that he had enough money. Everyone in the gathering seemed to be envious of him; especially a woman who looked like in her late 30s and was living in Gwangmyeong City. She was looking at Gun-Ho as if she was admiring him.

The president continued to talk.

"You can participate in an auction whether you have a lot of money, or you have a small amount of money. There are people who started with only several tens of million won and ended up growing it to several billion or several tens of billion won. Let's drink to our success! For the auction!"

"For the auction!"

Gun-Ho had never heard of the saying 'drink for the auction' before. It was funny. A realtor from Junggye Town sitting next to Gun-Ho started talking after gulping his soju.

"I love soju. If I have enough funds I would get that vacant lot in Gangdong District, that just came out on the auction market!"

The president seemed to be aware of that land.

"That one is too big. The appraised value is 4.5 billion won. Moreover, it is held in tenancy in common!"

"The tenant in common is an old man, 80 years old. It is a very attractive parcel of land. But I don't have money for it. Sh*t!"

"It's doable as long as you have enough funds. Not many people would go for it since it is held in a tenancy in common. So the auction would fail at its first and second attempts. That would make the price drop to about 2 something billion won."

"That sounds about right."

"Whew. Who would have that kind of money? Moreover, once you buy that land, you will need more money to buy the other ownership interests in the land."

"Maybe a business entity would buy it. That lot is very useful. A 15-floor office-tel building or a hotel could be built in the lot."

"I don't know... A company would face a lot of restriction if it tries to buy the lot. In addition, if the land acquisition is not directly related to the company's business, they would have to pay a lot of tax."

"Well, that's a shame. We know its true value, but we can't get it."

Gun-Ho listened intently to the conversation between the realtor from Junggye Town and the auction institution president.

When Gun-Ho returned to his office, he gave a new project to Manager Kang.

"Search a vacant lot on the auction market. The lot is located in Gangdong District. Its appraised value is 4.5 billion won, and it is held in tenancy in common."

"Gangdong District... Then the Seoul Eastern District Court would handle the case. Okay, I'm on it."

After spending quite some time, Manager Kang printed out the related information and brought them to Gun-Ho.

"The land is 200 pyung. It is on the main road; it is understandable that many investors are interested in it. However, it is held in tenancy in common, so it won't sell at the first or second try at an auction. Here is the statement about the current status of the land and its cadastral map for your reference."

"Could you bring the real estate registration and the cadaster of that land? And go visit the land."

"Okay. I will take pictures of them, and will check if there is any tenant."

"It is a vacant lot. How could there be a tenant; nothing is on the land."

"It's possible. Some people would bring a tent and sell stuff there or some people would pile up their belongings on the land. As I see on the cadastral map, the land is on the main road; its location is very good. So there's a possibility that there are people currently using the land."

"Hmm, I see. Please investigate thoroughly."

Note*

Galbi-tang – Korean short rib soup

90 Land Auction – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a call from Suk-Ho who was running a bar in Gyeongridan Street.

"Gun-Ho? It's me, Suk-Ho."

"Suk-Ho? What's up?"

"Did you open a new business? I heard from Min-Hyeok."

"Yeah, it's a small real estate company. It's in a small office-tel with two employees."

"That's awesome, man. So you do buy or sell a real estate for a client? According to Min-Hyeok, you acquired a OneRoomTel and you are operating it."

"Yeah, we do run a OneRoomTel, but it is really a small company."

"Jong-Suk is coming to my bar tomorrow, and I will come by your office with him."

"Isn't he going to work tomorrow? It's not even Sunday."

"Oh, he is working tomorrow. He just needs to come to Seoul around lunchtime to buy a motor at a hardware store in Euljiro 3-ga, so I asked him to have lunch with me since he is coming all the way to Seoul."

"Why don't you then come to my office? I will buy you guys lunch."

The following day, Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk came to Gun-Ho's office.

They expected to see a small office, but Gun-Ho's office was 30 pyung large. They were surprised. In addition, Manager Kang and Ji-Young were working seriously at their desks, that made them enter the office quietly.

"Have a seat. I'm sorry that the office is a bit small."

"It is nice."

Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk looked around the office.

Ji-Young brought them green tea.

"Thank... thank you."

Suk-Ho and Jong-Suk were usually noisy laughing and shouting at each other when they were together, but they were very quiet and calm that day, maybe because there were serious workers working in the office: Manager Kang and Ji-Young.

"You haven't had lunch yet, right? Let's get out of here!"

They went to a Chinese restaurant, 'Sin Tai Fung' close to the Gangnam Subway Station.

The restaurant looked expensive. Jong-Suk suggested going somewhere else for lunch.

"Let's just eat here. It's okay. I will order less pricey dishes."

"Please get us a course-A."

Gun-Ho ordered.

Xiaolongbao,* shrimp and vegetables, and spring rolls were being put on the table.

"Let's have some beer too."

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho were eating without a word.

"What's wrong with you guys? Jong-Suk, don't act funny. You are supposed to be talkative."

"Huh? Okay, bro. But these days, you are moving forward too quickly. You seemed to be someone else, not my bro. I feel kind of difficult around you."

"Haha. What are you talking about? I haven't changed. I'm still the same Gun-Ho

Goo, man."

Suk-Ho asked while having a Xiaolongbao.

"Isn't the OneRoomTel in the Gangnam area expensive? Min-Hyeok said you have more than one OneRoomTel in the area. You are rich, man."

"Nah, there were tons of really rich people in Gangnam."

"Maybe I should sell my bar business and start running a OneRoomTel. How much is the one where Min-Hyeok is working as a residential manager?"

"It's about 300 million won. I have three OneRoomTels: one in Bangbae Town, another one in Seocho Town, and the last one in Daechi Town. They cost me almost 900 million won."

"What? 900 million won?"

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho were astonished. Gun-Ho thought in mind,

'If you knew I have 16.4 billion won in cash, you would faint.'

"Man, I think you are the most successful man among our friends from high school."

"Nah, I don't think so. There is Won-Chul Jo who graduated from Yonsei University, and he is working in a big company. Also, how about Byung-Tae Hwang? He graduated from KAIST and he is working in a research facility in Pangyo. I can't compete with them."

"No, they are just an employee who is getting a fixed salary from a company."

"Haha. Stop your nonsense. Drink your beer."

Gun-Ho poured beer in Suk-Ho's glass.

"Bro, are you still living in Yeongdeungpo? It's kind of far to commute from there."

"No, I already moved."

"To where? Around here?"

"Yeah, in Dogok Town. I bought a condo."

"You bought a condo? Which one?"

"TowerPalace in Dogok Town. I bought it at an auction."

"What? TowerPalace?"

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho looked at each other in surprise.

"That condo is extremely expensive. What about your parents? Are they still living in Juan, Incheon?"

"No, I bought a condo for them too. They are now living in a HillState condo in Guweol Town. It's 50 pyung large."

"Really?"

Jong-Suk spilled his beer while listening to Gun-Ho.

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho kept eating with their hardened faces.

After lunch, Gun-Ho came back to his office and started reading a newspaper until he fell asleep. He woke up when his phone began ringing. The call was from a very long number; it was probably an international call.

"Voice phishing?"

Gun-Ho ignored and clicked the hang-up button.

The phone started ringing again from the same number.

"Who the hell? Hello!"

"Oh! Gjien Hao?" (Gun-Ho Goo in Chinese)

It had been a while since Gun-Ho heard his name in Chinese.

"Ni Shi Naweia?" (Who is calling?)

"Oh, it's me, Jien Wang. The professor at Zhejiang University." (No more Chinese translation from here)

"Oh, wow. Professor Wang. It has been a while. How have you been?"

"Hey, I'm coming to Seoul soon. I've been invited by the famous C Media. I will attend a forum on economics held by the C Media."

"Oh, really? That's nice. Come, let's meet and catch up. I want to see you, friend."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young were looking at Gun-Ho in surprise while Gun-Ho was talking on the phone in his fluent Chinese.

"Whoa, our CEO speaks Chinese fluently!"

They were amazed by Gun-Ho's fluency in Chinese.

Gun-Ho continued talking with Professor Wang.

"I'm coming to Korea with Seukang Li."

"Oh, the vice director guy in Shanghai City Construction Bureau."

"Yeah, except he is now a deputy mayor in a small city close to Shanghai."

"Really? That's good. Come quick, friend. I will buy you a drink."

"I won't have much time since I have to attend some meetings and a forum, but I will have one free day. I will let you know once the schedule is set."

"Okay. Talk to you later."

After Gun-Ho hung up the phone, Manager Kang said in amazement.

"Sir, you speak Chinese very very well."

"Not really. If someone who studied Chinese in college saw me speaking in Chinese, they will know I am not that fluent."

Ji-Young said,

"Sir, did you go to a college in China?"

"Yes, in fact, I did. I went to college there."

"I knew it. The call was from one of your classmates in college then?"

"He is not my classmate in college, but my good friends are coming to Korea soon."

"Oh, then your friends are businessmen."

"No, actually, one is a professor at Zhejiang University, and the other is a deputy mayor in a small city close to Shanghai. They are coming to attend an economic forum held by C Media."

"A professor and a deputy mayor?"

Manager Kang and Ji-Young looked at each other in surprise.

Gun-Ho hadn't thought about China until then.

"That's right. Let's grow GH Development and go to China which has a larger market."

Gun-Ho was filled with aspiration.

"I am currently doing leasing service of a small real estate, but this is just a start. I will diversify my business and get into various fields like automobile, tourism, transportation, chemicals, etc. and make GH Development Company the GH Group."

Gun-Ho wanted to relax his body and take a sauna, so he drove outside Gangnam. He wanted to get out of the busy Gangnam area for a while. He went to a sauna that was located inside the Education Community Center building. He washed his body with soap slowly while thinking.

'Let's erase my past self. I am born again. There are so many things I have to learn. Let's keep in touch with Professor Wang who is an intellectual and read more books.'

After having a sauna, Gun-Ho walked along the river in Yangjae Town. He aspired to enter the bigger market abroad someday.

Note*

Xiaolongbao – Chinese steamed bun

91 Land Auction – PART 2

Manager Kang gave a report to Gun-Ho on the vacant lot in Gangdong District after he had visited the land.

"There are two people who have ownership interests in the property. One of them defaulted on a debt, and that's why the property appeared on the auction market."

"Do you think it is possible that they might cancel the auction?"

"There are many creditors including secured creditors, and there is a lawsuit against one of the owners to seize the land to pay the debt. So, I believe it would be very difficult to cancel the auction."

"Hmm, I see. Oh, I forgot to tell you that the owner of the land is a 80 years old man."

"Do you want me to find and meet him?"

"No, not yet. We can contact him after we get the property by the auction, well if we could get the property."

"Okay."

"Is there a tenant?"

"Yes. There is one who is running a parking lot there. Running a parking lot is understandable because if the owner leaves a good location land on the main road for example without use, the owner has to pay a high tax, called the Idle Land Tax. So, many vacant lots in a city are being used as a parking lot. That's common and recommended by the government."

"I see. Is there any other tenant?"

"Yes, there are some people who built a temporary building on the lot and operate a fruit store, and there is another one who is running a tented cart, serving food. But those people can easily be evicted once we get the land."

"When is the first auction date?"

"It would be next Thursday."

"Okay. Let me know the result of the first auction."

Manager Kang was about to sit at his desk when he asked Gun-Ho.

"Umm, sir."

"Yes, is there anything else you want to tell me?"

"Our company, GH Development has 300 million capital, and it has assets of three OneRoomTels. Since the OneRoomTels are running in the leased buildings, we can't get a loan from a bank with these OneRoomTels because a bank doesn't consider the premium our company is holding on a OneRoomTel as collateral for a loan."

"Are you worried about how we are going to participate in the auction to acquire that expensive land without being able to lend money from a bank?"

"That's right. I'm just concerned."

"Haha. You don't have to worry about money, Manager Kang. You just need to do your best in your work."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho received a call from his mother.

"Gun-Ho? Is it a good time to talk or are you busy?"

"It's okay. How are you, mom?"

"I think you need to start thinking about your marriage. Someone wanted to introduce a very nice lady to you. That's why I'm calling you."

"No, mom. I am not interested in marrying anyone yet."

"You have to have children. You are getting old, son. Your dad wants to have grandkids."

"You have Jeong-Ah."

"Jeong-Ah is your sister's daughter. It's different. We want a grandchild from you, son. The girl I was talking about is the daughter of an elder of a church I'm attending. She is a nurse. I saw her picture. She looks cultured and classy. She is 32 years old."

"Mom, I'm busy now. I will talk to you later, okay?"

"Gun-Ho, hold on a second! Whew, did he already hang up?"

Gun-Ho received another phone call. This time, it was from his aunt.

"Gun-Ho? I heard you are doing very well these days."

"I'm doing okay. How's Jae-Woong? Is he doing fine with his government job?"

Jae-Woong was Gun-Ho's cousin who was two years younger than Gun-Ho. He got a level-9 government job a few years ago at the Department of Labor. Gun-Ho's aunt was so proud of him.

"Yeah, he is doing fine. He has a girlfriend, and he will marry her next year. She is working in the same department as him."

"Really? That's nice."

"Speaking of which, you need to get married too, Gun-Ho. There is a really nice girl I want to introduce to you. She's the niece of someone I know. She works at a credit union. Why don't you meet her?"

"No, aunt. I'm not interested."

"You will lose your opportunity to meet a nice girl, Gun-Ho. This girl is a bit old; she is 38 years old. She said she would take care of all house chores once she gets married."

"Aunt, I gotta go. I have a client waiting for me. I will talk to you later."

Gun-Ho hung up the phone and sighed.

Professor Wang called Gun-Ho. He said he would attend a northeast Asia

economic forum on coming Tuesday, held in Intercontinental Hotel located in Samgsung Town, Gangnam.

"Why don't you come to the forum as a guest? It will be at Diamond Hall in the hotel. You will see and meet a lot of journalists and business people there."

Gun-Ho thought it would be boring for him.

"Let's meet once your schedule is free so we can have fun, okay? When would that be?"

"According to the schedule sent by the forum organizer, I have no schedule on Thursday. I will do a quick shopping in the morning that day, so let's meet in the afternoon on Thursday."

"Sounds good. I really want to see you, friend."

Gun-Ho received another call. It was his sister.

"I hope it's not about marriage again."

Gun-Ho was reluctant to take the call but he did anyway.

"Gun-Ho? I'm sorry if I'm bothering you."

Gun-Ho's sister sounded down. Her voice was feeble."

"It's okay, sister. What's up?"

"I will have to move."

"Again? You just moved to a new place not long ago."

"I know. The landlord is asking us to vacate the apartment. Their son recently got married and their son wanted to move to the apartment we are renting."

"I see."

"So, umm... I'm not sure if I can ask you this..."

"Just say it, sister."

"Whew..."

"Just say it, sister! I'm busy."

"The apartment I'm renting right now, its monthly rent is 500,000 won with 10 million security deposit. It's really hard to find an apartment with the same price."

"Hmm."

"I can find an apartment with 500,000 won monthly rent, but they all are asking the security deposit of 20 million won."

Gun-Ho thought that her sister was telling him all these details to ask him to lend her money.

Gun-Ho's sister continued talking.

"So, since Jeong-Ah is living with our parents right now, is it okay with you if we move into our parents' condo in Guweol Town just for a while? The condo has four bedrooms and some of them are not being used. I think it is better for Jeong-Ah as well to live with her parents."

"What is your husband doing these days?"

"He is still driving a truck."

"I told you this before. That condo is our parents' home. You need to ask them."

"I asked them already, and they are okay with us moving in with them. But they told me that I need to discuss it with you because you are the owner of the condo."

"I'm okay as long as our parents are okay."

"Thank you, brother. As soon as we recover our financial situation, we will find our own place."

"I don't mind sister. You can stay there as long as our parents are okay with it. I gotta go now."

Gun-Ho thought over his sister's situation for a moment.

"Well, maybe it's better that way. The condo was too big for three people. My parents are getting old and they could be sick anytime soon. So, if my sister is living with them, she can take care of them. That's nice. I can now focus on my business."

Manager Kang told Gun-Ho that the first auction for the vacant lot in Gangdong District had failed as expected.

"What is the starting price for the second auction?"

"The price drops by 20%, so that would be 3.6 billion won."

"Keep an eye on it."

"And, sir..."

"Yes?"

"I've been visiting and checking the three OneRoomTels. I think we need to get fire insurance for them."

"Oh, I haven't thought of it. I heard the news that there was a major fire accident in a sauna and many people died."

"That's right."

Someone crossed Gun-Ho's mind when he was thinking about fire insurance. Gun-Ho's sister had a friend named Seung-Hee Park. She used to come to Gun-Ho's home to spend time with his sister and eat together sometimes. She was neat and cheerful.

"I heard she was divorced, and she was doing insurance sales."

Gun-Ho called his sister.

"Sister, does your friend, Seung-Hee still doing the insurance thing?"

"Yeah, why?"

"Ask her to come to my office tomorrow. If I am not in the office, she can talk with Ji-Young Jeong here. I will buy fire insurance from her."

"Thank you. She will be very excited. I will call her right away."

92 Professor Jien Wang 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho was thinking of what he would do if he successfully bought the vacant lot in Gangdong District at an auction.

"Should I build a hotel?"

Even if he successfully acquired the land by an auction, his property interest in the land would be only 50% since the land was held in tenancy in common and there was another owner who had the equal property interest in the land.

Say, he could persuade the other owner to sell his or her interest to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho would have to pay that owner an additional 600 million or 700 million won to buy his or her property interest.

It would not be just the price of the land Gun-Ho had to bear. If he wanted to do something with the land, he would have to build a building or a hotel, or whatever he wanted to build, and that would cost him additional money.

"How much more should I expect to spend with the land?"

Gun-Ho was drawing his plan with the land on a blank canvas in his head.

"The land is 200 pyung. If I assume the building will use 100 pyung out of it and the price of construction is 5 million won per pyung, then the total construction cost would be 500 million won. If I build a 10-floor building, sh*t! It would cost me 5 billion won. For a 15-floor building, 7.5 billion won would incur. Then how much in total would I spend for the land price and construction cost altogether? I guess it would cost me all of my money."

Gun-Ho wanted to ask Manager Kang more details on it, such as how many pyung would be allowed to use to build a building and exactly how much it would cost per pyung to build it. Then he decided not to ask him.

"It's too early to go into the details. Let's wait and see how things turn out at the second auction."

The idea of developing the vacant lot still lingered on Gun-Ho.

"Maybe I should put all of my money into this by building a hotel once I purchase the land, and become the president of a hotel. Even though the hotel wouldn't be located in the center of Seoul but a bit distant from the center, I can decorate the hotel really pretty and elegantly. I would be respected as the owner of a hotel who is running his own hotel."

Gun-Ho then thought of running an office-tel.

"I could build an office-tel there, a large one and I directly operate it. Assuming the number of rooms would be 150 and a monthly rent for each room would be 600,000 won, the monthly income from the office-tel would be 90 million won then. Maybe building an office-tel is better."

Gun-Ho couldn't decide which building he wanted to build and he repeatedly drew and erased a hotel or an office-tel on the land in his head.

Gun-Ho opened a newspaper published by C Media.

There was a big picture of the northeast Asia economic forum held in Intercontinental Hotel, that Professor Wang would attend.

"Economic diagnosis by scholars from all over the world? They are making it sound like a huge deal. Oh, here is the picture of Professor Wang." Gun-Ho chuckled.

"What? China and South Korea needs to take each other's hands and move forward as a partner? Well, that sounds nice." Gun-Ho chuckled again.

Gun-Ho was expecting a call from Professor Wang around tomorrow after he finished the official event.

"Gun-Ho? It's me! Professor Wang."

"Oh, I was waiting for your call."

"Come to the hotel I am staying. I don't have any schedule after 4 PM tomorrow."

"Okay. I will be there by 4 tomorrow then. Where do we meet?"

"Why don't you come up to my room? It's 12XX."

"Okay! See you there then."

Gun-Ho planned to take them to a restaurant in the Starfield COEX Mall for dinner, and then he wanted to go somewhere really nice.

"Should I take them to the room salon that the sister of Suk-Ho's friend is operating? It's close from here."

Gun-Ho shook his head.

"We don't have to go to a place that expensive. I am happy to see them but that room salon is way too expensive; it's not like we are meeting to close an important deal or something."

Gun-Ho then thought of that secret bar in Hannam Town.

"That place is pricey too. I do love the vibe and atmosphere the bar is creating, but Professor Wang and his friend might feel uncomfortable in a too luxurious bar like that."

Gun-Ho kept thinking about how to find a good place to have fun with them, tomorrow after dinner.

"Whew. I can't think of any good place. I should have often eaten in good places in my daily life, so I know where to go whenever I have a visitor in town."

Gun-Ho thought of Suk-Ho from Gyeongridan Street. He probably knew a lot of good places. Gun-Ho called him.

"Suk-Ho? It's me, Gun-Ho."

"Oh, President Goo, how come are you calling to a humble person like me?"

Suk-Ho sometimes talked in a twisted way. Gun-Ho was not sure whether Suk-Ho remembered what he did when they were in high school, but Gun-Ho still clearly remembered that Suk-Ho took Gun-Ho's umbrella. Gun-Ho tried to let it go since it happened a long time ago.

"I have friends who came from China and I want to take them to a nice place after dinner to have fun. Do you happen to know any good bar we could go?"

"Itaewon is the right place for it! There are tons of places like that."

"So, which one do you recommend?"

"How many people are going?"

"Two. Well, it will be three people including me."

"What are their occupations?"

"One is a college professor and the other is a deputy mayor."

"A college professor and a deputy mayor? Then you should choose a place classy and refined."

"That doesn't matter actually. They are my friends and we are all at the same age."

"Really? How did you meet people like that? Well, let me see... There is one good place. Its name is 'ArariYo.' It's a bar where you can see a traditional Korean musical and dance performance while you drink."

"Oh, they do traditional Korean drum dance too? That sounds awesome. Give me the direction to that bar."

A lady entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Umm, is Ms. Ji-Young Jeong here?"

"Yes, that's me."

Ji-Young stood up and showed the lady to the meeting table.

Gun-Ho looked at the lady carefully; it was her, his sister's friend, Seung-Hee Park. Gun-Ho stood up from his seat.

"Are you Seung-Hee sister?"

"Oh my gosh! Gun-Ho?!"

The lady seemed to be surprised to see Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was also surprised because she had changed a lot. She used to be a very neat and proud young lady. Now she looked shabby and old. Also, Gun-Ho remembered that she was tall but the lady in front of him right now seemed to be short.

"Long time no see. Have a seat."

"I barely recognize you, Gun-Ho. You have grown to be a dashing gentleman. I wouldn't have recognized you if I just passed by you on the street."

Ji-Young brought them green tea.

"Where do you live, Seung-Hee sister?"

"I am still living in Bucheon. Your office looks clean and cozy."

Seung-Hee looked around the office while sipping her green tea.

"My sister told me that you are selling insurance."

"Yeah, I happened to work in this field. It's sort of a rewarding job."

"Our company is operating three OneRoomTels right now and I'd like to buy fire insurance for those three. You can talk with Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, regarding more details about it because I have to leave now. I have an appointment with clients from China."

Ji-Young nodded her head at Seung-Hee.

"Oh, you are leaving? Sure, I will talk with this lady then. It was really nice seeing you again Gun-Ho. You looked more handsome than you were when you were little."

Seung-Hee looked at Gun-Ho as if she admired him.

In fact, Gun-Ho became neat and dashing lately.

He had been wearing only brand-name shirts and suits, and even for t-shirts and shoes. Clothes make the man. Moreover, Gun-Ho had regularly been receiving

skin care from a skin care shop. He certainly looked better. His complexion had been brightened and he looked like someone who had never experienced hard work in his life because he was born to a rich family. No one could imagine that he had once been a factory worker—doing manual labor job in a small factory.

93 Professor Jien Wang 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho went to the Intercontinental Hotel to see Professor Wang.

Professor Wang's room door was slightly opened, showing that he had been expecting Gun-Ho.

"Jien Wang! Long time no see!"

"Oh, Gjen Hao (Gun-Ho Goo)! It's really good to see you again!"

They hugged each other.

"Hey, President Goo, you seemed to gain some weight. You are probably doing well back in Korea."

"You look great too. So, you are done with all the official events scheduled?"

"I have one more day left."

"Whoa, what are these?"

There were tons of shopping bags on Professor Wang's room floor.

"Yeah, I did some shopping this morning for my family and friends in China. Korean products are indeed high-quality products."

Professor Wang put his thumb up.

"Where is Deputy Mayor Seukang Li?"

"Oh, he is staying next room. He is arranging his shopping bags right now, I guess."

"Really? I'm so glad to see you both. Let's go have dinner. It's almost dinnertime. There are many good restaurants in Starfield COEX Mall around here."

"Sure. But let's wait for a moment. I'm expecting someone else."

"Who is it?"

"He is a friend of mine. I went to Yale University with him. He is Korean. He is on his way here."

"Really? What is he doing for a living?"

"He is a lawyer. He practices international law mostly. He is also the same age as us."

Gun-Ho and Professor Wang spent some time in Professor Wang's room while waiting for the man who Professor Wang was expecting.

Gun-Ho walked to the window and looked down; he could see Bongeunsa.

Professor Wang came to Gun-Ho and asked.

"President Goo, what is that building? It looks like a traditional Korean house. Is it one of the cultural assets?"

Professor Wang was pointing to Bongeunsa.

"No, it's a Buddhist temple."

"Buddhist temple?"

"Yes, it is called Bongeunsa. You can visit there when you go jogging in the morning."

"Oh, can anyone enter?"

"Of course, anyone can enter. It's free."

While Gun-Ho and Professor Wang were conversing about the Buddhist temple, a man entered the room. He was a tall and slim good-looking man.

"Hey, Attorney Kim!"

Professor Wang hugged his guest who just came into the room.

"Oh, this is President Goo I told you about on the phone."

"I'm Young-Jin Kim. Nice to meet you."

Gun-Ho gave him a handshake. Young-Jin pulled out his business card from the inner pocket of his jacket and gave it to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho handed his business card to him as well.

"Attorney at Kim&Jeong Law Office?"

Gun-Ho thought that this guy was an attorney working in that famous Kim&Jeong, but he was wondering why Kim&Jeong was a law office, rather than a law company.

"Isn't Kim&Jeong a law company?"

"Actually, we are more like a partnership."

Attorney Kim grinned. He looked like someone who grew up in a good affluent family. Attorney Kim looked at Gun-Ho's business card again.

"I like your business card design. It's pretty. GH Development Company... is it then a real estate development company?"

"Yes, that's right. It's a small company with only two employees. Haha."

"You are the CEO of the company."

Professor Wang cut in on Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim's conversation.

"Hey, give me your business card to me too. Both of you!"

While Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim were handing their business cards to Professor Wang, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li came into the room.

"Hey, Seukang Li!"

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo! Good to see you, man."

They hugged each other.

"I heard you quit your director position and now you are working as a deputy mayor in some city!?"

"Yeah, it's right next to Shanghai. What about you? How have you been?"

Gun-Ho gave his business card to Seukang Li. Gun-Ho's business card was written in Korean on the front page and in English on the back of the page.

"Is it a real estate development company? GH Development?"

"That's right. Bangjisan (a realtor's office)!"

It seemed that Seukang Li and Attorney Kim had never met each other before. Professor Wang introduced them to each other.

"This man went to Yale University with me, and this guy is the deputy mayor in Kunshan City right next to Shanghai. He is my hometown friend."

They bowed to each other.

"Let's go downstairs! We can continue to talk while having dinner."

The four men walked to the Starfield COEX Mall.

Professor Wang seemed to be envious of Korea's economic growth. He commented while looking at the commercial stores in the Starfield COEX Mall.

"I'm impressed by Korea's economic growth. All these commercial stores are sophisticated. I think we, Asia can surely compete with Western countries."

"China has developed remarkably. China is G-2."

"China is large in size, but we still have a long way to go to improve ordinary Chinese people's life. All those Korean people walking on the street right now, they looked wealthy."

"Oh! There is a restaurant."

"Its name is weird. It says 'Porchetta.'

"It sounds like an Italian restaurant. Let's just have dinner here. We don't need to go further to look for another one. This one looks good."

"Italy? Haha. So, I will have an Italian food in Korea, huh?"

Those four men entered the restaurant.

Gun-Ho ordered chicken, knowing it is Chinese people's favorite meat.

He also ordered Buttered Chicken Rice, Vongole Bread, and Crème Pasta, etc.

"Let's have some wine."

"It's tasty!"

The four men started eating. Professor Wang and Attorney Kim talked to each other in English. Gun-Ho was just listening to them while being impressed by their fluent English even he couldn't understand a thing. Attorney Kim raised his voice showing off his fluent English knowing that Gun-Ho didn't speak English. Deputy Mayor Li seemed that he didn't understand English either.

Attorney Kim then asked some cliché questions to Gun-Ho; he might feel sorry for Gun-Ho.

"So, where do you live, President Goo?"

"I'm living in Dogok Town."

"Oh, I live close to Dogok Town, in Daechi Town. My parents are living in the same town in a Mido condo. You live in Dogok Town... then do you live in TowerPalace?"

"That's right. I live in TowerPalace building A."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho felt that Attorney Kim was showing a bit more respect to Gun-Ho when he heard that Gun-Ho was a resident of TowerPalace.

While Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim were talking in Korean, Professor Wang felt bored and cut in on their conversation.

"Hey, Gun-Ho! Deputy Mayor Li has no schedule tomorrow. He only attended the event on the first day and he won't attend the academic conference that is scheduled tomorrow."

"Oh, really? Then he has his own agenda coming to Korea?"

"He wants to visit a few industrial complexes. So, I was wondering if you know anyone who could help him tomorrow."

"I can do that."

"That would be great, but do you have time for it?"

"I will make time for a friend! My friend came all the way to Korea!"

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. I really appreciate that."

While Gun-Ho and Professor Wang were talking in Chinese, Attorney Kim became quiet. He then talked to Gun-Ho while feeling envious.

"Oh, President Goo, you sound like a native Chinese. When did you learn your Chinese?"

"I just had to learn to survive. Haha. Let's drink."

Three different languages were all mixed together at Gun-Ho's table: Korean, Chinese, and English.

Once they started drinking, Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li began to talk in Chinese. When they talked to each other, they spoke a Chinese dialect of the southern area. It was hard for Gun-Ho to understand.

Gun-Ho talked to Attorney Kim in Korean.

"I heard it is hard to get a job in Kim&Jeong, but once you get in, you get a significantly high salary."

"Whew. Don't get me started. The work is extremely hard. I usually work until 11 PM or even midnight every single day. That's normal and expected."

"Really? There is no easy job, huh?"

"I have a pile of work in my car trunk right now."

"What kind of work do you do?"

"I have a law license from the USA, so I usually handle international finances and M&A."

"Oh, I see. Did you go to high school in the U.S.?"

"No, not at all. I was born and raised here in Korea, in Apgujeong Town, Seoul specifically. I went to Seoul National University. I actually went to the U.S. after graduating from college."

"So you get your master's degree and Ph.D. from Yale University."

"I went to Yale Law School and came back to Korea after getting my law license. I sometimes feel difficult to get along with attorneys who studied law in Korea. Haha."

Attorney Kim lifted up his shiny gold metal frame glasses with his finger and smiled with his white teeth.

Gun-Ho thought that this guy looked like the typical guy who was born and raised in a wealthy family in the famous school district, Gangnam District-8. On top of that, he was smart and good-looking. He was the UmChinAh*.

Note*

UmChinAh – A Korean word. If directly translating it, it is 'my mother's friend's son.'

It indicates a person who seemed to be so perfect that my mom always talks about him who is her friend's son. And she doesn't stop there usually, but she compares that guy with me and that makes me feel really bad and stressed.

94 Professor Jien Wang 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho, Professor Wang, Deputy Mayor Li, and Attorney Kim started their second wine bottle at the Italian food restaurant, Porchetta. Gun-Ho ordered additional seafood salad and snacks that went well with the wine. Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim didn't drink more than one glass of wine since they had to drive. Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li enjoyed the wine mostly.

While Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li were talking to each other in Chinese southern area dialect, Gun-Ho conversed with Attorney Kim in the Korean language.

"How do you usually spend your time on Sundays then? Do you go mountain climbing maybe?"

"I don't do mountain climbing. I sometimes play golf through the field. Why don't you join me in golf, President Goo? Do you like playing golf?"

"Golf? Umm, I... I am not good at golf."

Gun-Ho had never played golf before. He just didn't have the opportunity, time and money to play it. He had been busy in making money by working at a factory or running a restaurant.

Attorney Kim asked Professor Wang.

"Hey, Professor Wang. Do you play golf in China?"

"I don't have anyone to go with to play golf."

"Let's play golf together in China someday. It would be nice to play with you guys."

"Deputy Mayor Li is not a good golf player. I'm sure President Goo is playing very well."

"Huh? Me? I'm... I'm not good at it either."

Gun-Ho remembered that the branch manager of the stockbroking firm once suggested Gun-Ho a round of golf. Once again, these friends are talking about golf. Gun-Ho thought he would have to learn it.

"So, are we done here? Let's move to another place. I know a good place in Itaewon Town."

"Itaewon? It sounds familiar. I think I saw that word in a tour guide book. I'm in!"

At that moment, Attorney Kim grabbed the restaurant bill and headed to the counter.

"No. I will pay for dinner."

"No, I want to treat you. I will have to say bye here though because I have to get up early tomorrow morning for work. I won't be able to join you for the second round this evening. Instead, I will pay for this bill."

Attorney Kim insisted on paying the bill for the dinner.

"Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li, I'm sorry that I have to go now. I have an important meeting tomorrow early morning, so I have to work till late tonight."

"It's okay. We understand. I will see you again later."

"Okay, then. I'm leaving. I will come to China when I get less busy. Let's have a round of golf."

"Sure. I will have Deputy Mayor Li practice golf until then."

Gun-Ho went down to the underground parking lot with Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li, where his car was parked at.

"Get in. It's my car."

"Oh, Land Rover! Nice car!"

Gun-Ho's party headed to Itaewon Town.

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. And thank you for volunteering to take me to industrial complexes tomorrow."

"Why are you going there, by the way?"

"We are developing an industrial complex in Jinxi Town, Kunshan City where I work as a deputy mayor. So, we want to use Korean industrial complex as the benchmark for determining the design, improvement, etc."

Gun-Ho nodded his head showing that he understood.

Gun-Ho found the bar in Itaewon Town, that Suk-Ho recommended, named 'ArariYo'.

"This area is very popular among foreigners. Look at the pedestrians passing by over there. They are Westerners and African Americans."

"Oh, I see."

"Welcome to ArariYo!"

The waiters who were standing at the main entrance of the bar greeted Gun-Ho's party with a loud voice. One of them led Gun-Ho's party to the basement. They passed a long hallway decorated with mirrors on the wall before reaching to the main hall.

They could hear the sound of traditional Korean drums. Gun-Ho looked around; the tables were almost full. In the center of the hall, there was a stage, and a dancer was dancing there. People at the tables around the stage were drinking while watching the performance.

"Kirei! Kirei!" ('beautiful' in Japanese)

Gun-Ho could hear the Japanese language. There might be many Japanese customers here.

Gun-Ho's party sat at a table that the waiter showed. The lighting of the stage was bright while the lighting in the seating area was dim, so people could see the performance on the stage better.

"That's the traditional Korean dance."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho's table was being set up with fruits, snacks and bottles of beer and the party were enjoying the performance while having beer and snacks. The dancer's dance became intense. She started spinning while dancing with a traditional Korean drum.

"Kirei! Kirei!"

The Japanese people there seemed to enjoy the performance a lot; they were clapping as the dancer was spinning. Professor Wang looked around the hall.

"I don't see any Chinese tourist here. I only see a lot of Japanese tourists."

As the sound of the traditional Korean drum became slow, the dancer took off her top. That left her with white underwear. She continued dancing.

"She probably feels hot with all those dancing."

Deputy Mayor Li said without taking his eyes off the dancing.

The dancer this time took off the underwear and kept dancing naked on top. After a moment, she took off her skirt as well while dancing.

Silence filled the air. Everyone including the Japanese tourists, Professor Wang, and Deputy Mayor Li craned their necks to get a better view of the stage. Gun-Ho could hear swallowing sounds from here and there.

'Hmm, this is why Suk-Ho recommended this bar. It is certainly unique; I give him that. But this is too lewd.' Gun-Ho thought.

People there were watching the "unique" performance intently without saying a word.

(I am leaving out the description for the rest of the performance.)

Gun-Ho thought he wouldn't be able to drive tonight since he drank a few beers.

"I think I will have to call a paid designated driver."

"What's that?"

"Oh, it's someone who could drive us to our home for a fee."

"We could be stopped for a sobriety test on the way at this hour, right?"

"Yeah. If you get caught, the fine is extremely high and you could lose your driver's license."

"I see. We should be very careful."

Gun-Ho called for a designated paid driver and after a while, the driver was driving Gun-Ho's car heading to Intercontinental hotel to drop off Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li.

"Thank you, Gun-Ho for today. We have a wonderful time."

"I will come to your hotel by 10 am tomorrow to pick up Deputy Mayor Li. Good night."

The paid designated driver continued to drive heading to Gun-Ho's TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town.

The next day, Gun-Ho and Deputy Mayor Li were driving to go to an industrial complex.

Gun-Ho asked Deputy Mayor Li who was sitting in the front passenger seat.

"Do you want to go to Asan City or Pyeongtaek City where the national industrial complex is?"

"A national industrial complex? No, I want to see an industrial complex in a small city in the province."

"Really? How big is your city planning to build an industrial complex?"

"About 1,000 moo."

"1,000 moo?"

Gun-Ho couldn't quickly understand the size when Deputy Mayor Li gave the

size in a Chinese measuring unit.

"How big would that be?"

"It's a bit less than 700,000 .

"What? 700,000 ? Then I guess it's well larger than 200,000 pyung."

Gun-Ho thought that the Asan Techno Valley in Asan City would be a good one to show Deputy Mayor Li. The YS Tech that Gun-Ho had worked before was located close to that industrial park.

"Let's go to Asan City! After visiting the Asan Techno Valley we can stop by Cheonan Industrial Park too."

They arrived at the Asan Techno Valley.

"Whoa, this is nice. It's sizable. Korea is not a large country in size but their industrial complex that is located even in a province is huge. How large is this?"

Gun-Ho picked up a pamphlet from the management office.

"Wow! 2,980,000 !"

Deputy Mayor Li was astonished.

Gun-Ho was surprised by its size too. 2,980,000 is over 900,000 pyung.

"According to the pamphlet, this complex includes a place to work, a place to live, and a place to relax. So, I guess there are not only factories here but also a residential community and commercial buildings. That's why it is so big."

"Hmm."

Seukang Li seemed to be impressed by looking at the factories and the condo community there.

"This is really nice. Very well planned and built."

Seunkang Li took out a note and wrote down something on it before taking pictures of the complex.

Gun-Ho, next, took Deputy Mayor Li to the Cheonan Industrial Park.

"Gun-Ho, where did you say you worked before?"

"I worked in a plastic factory as an injection molding worker. Did you say you had worked at a hot-rolled carbon steel manufacturer?"

"Yes, but not for a long time though. After about three years of working at the factory, I became the leader of a labor union. So the plastic factory you worked before is around here?"

"No, I had moved location from one factory to another."

Gun-Ho showed Deputy Mayor Li the third and fourth subdivision within the Cheonan Industrial Park. He then took him to the subdivision for foreign entities.

"Hmm, there is a separate area for foreign entities."

Seungkang Li diligently wrote something down and took pictures.

"The sign over there says 'Baeksuk Agricultural Industrial Park.'"

"An agricultural industrial park? Let's go see it!"

Deputy Mayor Li seemed to be excited to see an agricultural industrial park. He seemed to think that he could find something useful there, that he could apply to the industrial park that his small city—Kunshan was planning to build.

Once they arrived at Baeksuk Agricultural Industrial Park, Deputy Mayor Li got off the car and looked around it.

"Is there a management office for this agricultural industrial park?"

"A management office?"

Gun-Ho and Deputy Mayor Li went to the management office after Gun-Ho asked someone who was passing by, about the location of it. Luckily, there was a manager in the office at that time.

"How large is this agricultural industrial park?"

"It's 360,000 "

Gun-Ho was interpreting for Deputy Major Li.

"President Goo, could you ask him how many entities are occupying the park currently?"

"It started with 50 entities, but now there are about 100 entities already in the park. Some of the occupants share the factory building."

"I guess the land here should be expensive since it is close to the city."

Deputy Mayor Li talked to himself.

95 Professor Jien Wang 2 – PART 2

After visiting the industrial complex in Cheonan, they headed back to Seoul.

While they were still driving toward Seoul, Deputy Mayor Li was lost in thought for quite a while with his arms crossed.

"Hey, Gun-Ho. How much capital did you invest in your real estate development company?"

"Not much, 300 million won. It's about 300,000 U.S. dollar."

"How much gross sales do you make?"

"It's not much either. Probably it's about 500 million Korean won per month."

"Can I take a look at your company's financial statements?"

"What for?"

"I'd like to set up a joint venture with you."

"A joint venture?"

"Yeah, if we want to enter into a joint venture, you need to prepare your company's financial statements."

"Umm, I just started my company. It hasn't even a year yet."

"December is around the corner. You will soon make a financial report on closing accounts. How much debt do you have?"

"There is none."

"Even a penny?"

"Correct."

"Really?"

Deputy Mayor Li smiled slightly.

Seukang Li continued to talk while looking outside the window.

"As a matter of fact, I am planning to build an industrial Park in my city. I am the one who came up with the idea, planning and leading the project. I want to invite foreign companies to take part in that industrial complex and I'm so worried if we could attract enough foreign firms."

"Are you worried about not attracting enough foreign firms?"

"If I can't bring enough foreign companies to join us, I, as the person who is in charge of the project, will be in trouble."

"What if you succeeded in attracting enough foreign companies?"

"The government will recognize my ability to handle projects, and I might be promoted and go back to Shanghai. So, I was thinking of setting up a joint venture with a foreign company that can bring more foreign investors, build factories, do landscaping and managing them in the future."

"Whew, I don't think I can handle all those work; that's too much for me. In addition, it sounds like it will cost a fortune."

"We will start with 3,000,000 U.S. dollars."

"See? 3 million dollars is a lot. I don't have that kind of money."

"Since it is a joint venture, China will contribute 50% and we expect a Korean company to contribute the other 50%. I already talked with several foreign companies yesterday and they all seemed to be interested. However, I prefer to work with you, President Goo because I know I can trust you. But if you are not interested, that's a shame."

Gun-Ho thought about it for a moment.

'The joint venture will start with 3 million dollars of capital and 50% of 3 million dollars is 1.5 billion Korean won...'

Gun-Ho actually could handle 1.5 billion won with his personal money since he currently had 16.4 billion won in his bank and stock accounts.

"Professor Jien Wang will join us for the joint venture as a shareholder. We are not setting up the joint venture because we don't have 3 million dollars. We want to have a co-venturer who could facilitate bringing more foreign companies to join the industrial complex. If you could be our co-venturer and attract more Korean companies to join our industrial complex, that would be really great."

"How much will Professor Wang be involved in the project?"

"He hasn't decided yet. I am hoping that he could bring U.S. companies into the industrial park but that probably wouldn't be easy. I expect that many Korean companies would be more interested in joining us since we are neighboring countries."

"Hmm... When do you plan to set up the joint venture?"

"Around April when 3-Flow work is completed."

"What is 3-Flow work?"

"Oh, it's about very basic infrastructure construction. We need to first build power generation plant for the electricity, then setup the water supply as the second work, and then for the third work we will have to pave the road. So the 3-Flow work is about electricity flow, water flow, and road flow. We still have time, so just think about it, okay?"

"That's an interesting way to put it. So the Chinese co-venturer would be Kunshan City?"

"The city itself cannot directly participate. Instead, there is a construction company being run by the city's funds and its name is Jinxi Construction Company. It's a government-owned company and you will set up a joint venture with this company. Since it is a government-owned company, it's safe to work with and it's guaranteed to be able to send profits you made in China to your country."

"Hmm."

"Your company is not exactly the perfect candidate for a co-venturer; however since the company has no debt, it's very doable to have your company picked up as our co-venturer. Moreover, by the time when we would complete the 3-Flow work, you will have your first-year financial statements. Jinxi Construction Company could handle building factories and doing landscaping; they have professionals and experts in the fields."

"Hmm."

It was a tempting offer to Gun-Ho.

It was the day when Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor would return to China.

Gun-Ho didn't have to take them to the airport since a shuttle bus was provided by the event organizer to the group who was invited for the forum.

Gun-Ho still came to Intercontinental Hotel to say good-bye.

Professor Wang extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"Thank you for everything, Gun-Ho. I've had such a pleasant stay because of you, my friend. Come visit me to China, okay?"

"Sure. I will come after Korean Thanksgiving Day. I want to see the Jinxi Industrial Park as well."

"There is nothing there yet. Are you interested?"

"I need to see it first. I was told that you would participate in the joint venture for building that industrial complex."

"I haven't decided yet but that is my current intention. If you are interested in, let's talk more once you come to China."

"Okay. Bye Professor Wang. Bye Seukang Li."

Gun-Ho had a handshake with Deputy Mayor Li as well.

Gun-Ho turned on his computer to check the stocks he invested money in earlier, which was recommended by the stockbroking firm.

"3% up in price within a month."

The stockbroking company didn't recommend stocks that fluctuated severely in price. They always recommended blue-chip stocks that didn't produce a price hike but instead, had steady earnings.

"But still, I made 90 million won in a month because I invested 300 million won!"

Money indeed made money. When Gun-Ho had invested 10 million won that he borrowed from the sunshine loan program and if there was a 3% increase in price, the profit would be only 300,000 won. He used that 300,000 won to pay his OneRoom rent or to repair his shabby vehicle, or buy a drink for himself. Moreover, he had to pay the interest for the loan, that would make the small profits even less. That was the case if his stock's price went up. If his stock's price went down, he would incur a loss in stocks; the loan interest would make the loss even bigger. He had to rob Peter to pay Paul if that happened.

"Even with only a 3% price increase with the blue-chip stocks, I made 90 million won. That's the annual salary of the workers in a big company. Won-Chul Jo who graduated from one of the top universities and is proudly working in a big company—and my classmates' admirer would faint if he knew this."

Gun-Ho checked his personal bank account.

He received his wage of 4 million won plus 2 million won for the office-tel lease to his company.

"It seems like Ms. Ji-Young Jeong tried hard to send me exactly 4 million won for my wage after the tax. So she actually made my wage slightly over 4 million won."

Gun-Ho was making money without doing much.

When he worked in a factory—he always had to spend more than he made, even just to breathe. Now, he was making a lot of money by just breathing.

96 Flavors of Life 1 – PART 1

Korean Thanksgiving Day came around.

Gun-Ho went to his parents' home in Guweol Town, Incheon to have a memorial service for ancestors. When he entered the condo, he could smell his mother's cooking prepared for the memorial service.

"Gun-Ho, you came. The table is already set for the memorial service."

Gun-Ho looked at his mother and father. They looked good. Their skin complexion looked bright and neat, and also they seem to gain some weight, maybe because they had been doing well in a better environment in this new condo. They were wearing nice new clothes as well.

"What do you think about my outfit? Your sister bought this for me."

Gun-Ho's sister, her husband and Jeong-Ah ran out of their room.

"My uncle is here!"

Jeong-Ah was wearing a colorful Korean traditional dress. She looked like a fairy.

"My princess, you are getting prettier every time I see you."

Gun-Ho hugged his niece. Gun-Ho's sister and her husband were standing awkwardly. They seemed not to know how to act around Gun-Ho because they were living in a condo that Gun-Ho bought for his parents. However, they looked good and healthy.

After finishing the memorial service for ancestors, they started having their breakfast together on the same table, eating the same food that was served for their ancestors.

Gun-Ho could hear his mother's laughing sound and his sister laughed along with her. Whenever Gun-Ho had visited his parents' home before, he always had to hear his mother's grievances. Now, she looked happy. Gun-Ho felt good too.

"Right. This is the flavors of life."

Gun-Ho drank Jeongjong* placed on the table.

"Mom, can I do the New Year's greeting full bow to the uncle?"

Jeong-Ah was badgering her mother to let her do the New Year's greeting to Gun-Ho while sitting on her mother's lap.

"No, Jeong-Ah. Today is not New Year's Day, but it is Korean Thanksgiving Day."

Gun-Ho laughed while spreading his arms wide open.

"That's okay, Jeong-Ah. If you want, I will take your New Year's full bow greeting from you."

Jeong-Ah quickly gave Gun-Ho a full bow.

"You started going to school, right? Use this to buy your school supplies. Enjoy your school life."

Gun-Ho was about to hand 50,000 won to Jeong-Ah when his sister stopped him.

"Just give her 10,000 won. 50,000 won is too much for her. She is too young for that money."

Jeong-Ah grabbed the money and quickly went to her room.

Gun-Ho asked his mother.

"Mom, does the aunt visit you here sometimes?"

"Yeah, she came here once. She almost fainted in surprise. She said she thought we were making a joke when we told her that you bought us a 50 pyung condo."

Gun-Ho's father was smiling while listening to her wife talking about the episode with his sister.

"Oh, did your aunt call you to introduce a girl to you?"

"She did."

"She was going to introduce you to a 38 years-old girl who is working in a credit union, right? Damn woman. How dare did she try to introduce a girl who was a lot older than you? She always thinks her son is better than you and she is trying to keep it that way."

Gun-Ho's mother complained.

"Stop it."

"Why should I stop? I'm telling the truth. That woman would never try that kind of nonsense again since she saw us living in this nice condo."

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law poured Jeongjong in Gun-Ho's glass.

"Take this drink."

"Oh, I should have poured in your glass first."

Gun-Ho tried to take the bottle of Jeongjong from his brother-in-law, but his brother-in-law insisted on pouring it in his glass first.

"What do you do these days?"

"I'm still driving a truck. I am delivering fabrics to vendors."

"Are you getting enough work?"

"Well, it's okay."

Gun-Ho wanted to ask him how much he was making, but he didn't. Gun-Ho's sister said while eating a Korean pancake.

"Since we live in this condo, we don't have to pay rent any longer. So, I think we can save up and buy our own truck to do a transportation work, maybe after five years or so."

"What do you mean by getting your own truck and doing a transportation work with it?"

Gun-Ho's father answered for his son-in-law.

"That means you do someone else's business with your own truck."

"That's right."

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law said while pouring more Jeongjong in his father-in-law's glass.

"Could anyone elaborate?" Gun-Ho wasn't fully following it.

"I could get a job in a transportation company and do their transportation work with my own truck. So, even though the truck is mine, it would be registered and run under the name of that transportation company. So, I just drive my truck without worrying about getting enough transportation work."

"Hmm, because a truck is expensive, a small transportation company hires truck drivers with their own trucks, huh?"

"Not necessarily. Even a big transportation company hires truck drivers with their own trucks because they need several tens of trucks. Also, it is easier for them to handle the car accidents and insurance."

"That makes sense. So the trucks are owned by individual truck drivers."

"That's right. Those truck drivers are self-employed."

Gun-Ho's sister cut in on the conversation.

"So your brother-in-law wanted to buy a 100 million won truck and get a job in a big company; that's his dream. He could get in a big company like Nongshim, Lotte, or Hite Jinro or other big companies. There are a lot of big companies that hires a truck driver with the right truck."

"A 100 million won truck? How much can you make per month with it then?"

Gun-Ho's sister answered for her husband while having a bracken dish.

"About 5 million won I guess."

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law waved his hand in perplexity, gesturing that's not

exactly true.

"I can't make that much. I have to take all the expenses I have to bare into account, such as gas and insurance. Maybe about 3 million won, I would say after subtracting all the expenses."

"Hmmm... 100 million won."

As Gun-Ho was thinking, his brother-in-law said after gulping his drink.

"It won't cost 100 million won. A 4 or 5-ton wing body truck would cost about 80 or 90 million won. I can get a job in a big company with those types of truck."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho thought.

'If my brother-in-law could make 3 million won per month with the truck and my sister makes another 1.6 million by working at a paper cup manufacturer, their monthly total income would be 4.6 million won. I guess that's enough income for three people.'

"Do you have any debt?"

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law let out a deep sigh before answering Gun-Ho's question.

"I made a mistake in running my business three years ago. I have a bad credit score now; however, I'm trying to pay the debt off gradually. I've already filed personal bankruptcy and I am paying 500,000 won to the court every month to pay off my debt."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho assumed that his brother-in-law was currently making more or less 2 million won. He knew that because he used to work in a factory before. So, before his sister's family moved into the parents' condo, they had to pay 500,000 won to the court and pay another 500,000 won for rent, and that left the family with almost nothing in hand. So his sister had to work at a factory.

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law gulped another glass of Jeongjong.

"I am so grateful that we could live in this condo because of you, Gun-Ho."

He smiled while pouring Jeongjong in Gun-Ho's glass.

Gun-Ho made 90 million won this month by investing 3 billion won in blue-chip stocks. Gun-Ho thought for a while before making his decision.

'Let's buy him a truck with the 90 million won I made from the stock. It's better than opening a restaurant or café for him to operate because he doesn't have any experience in that field, which is too risky. With a restaurant or café, he would have to work so hard till late at night to eventually close the business someday.'

"Let's do this."

Everyone looked at Gun-Ho.

"You said the 4-ton wing body truck costs 90 million won, right? Buy the truck; I will send you 90 million won and you give my parents a certain amount of money regularly."

Everyone's eyes widened while looking at Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho was thinking while driving on the Gyeongin Expressway.

'If my sister and her husband take good care of my parents, then I will give that HillState condo in Guweol Town where they are living in right now to them after my parents passed away.'

This way, Gun-Ho thought he wouldn't need to worry about their family anymore. He felt like the burden was being lifted off his shoulders. He felt good and started humming while driving.

Note*

Jeongjong – a clear and refined rice wine.

97 Flavors of Life 1 – PART 2

The second auction for the vacant lot in Gangdong District failed as expected. Gun-Ho was keeping an eye on the land while waiting for the right moment to purchase it at a low price.

Manager Kang suggested Gun-Ho to participate in the third auction for the land. After having Manager Kang's report on the vacant lot, Gun-Ho asked him while looking at the calendar.

"What's the starting price for the third auction?"

"The price was 3.6 billion won at the second auction, so it will drop to 2.88 billion won for the third try of the auction."

"Do you think I should offer 3 billion won?"

"Well, since the land is held in tenancy in common and the property interest for sale at the auction is only for 50% of the full property interest, it is possible that you would be the only one bidding on the land. If that happens, I guess we can offer the same amount as the starting price."

"Let's go to the Seoul Eastern District Court together at the third auction day."

"Okay, I will."

"And, sir..."

"Yes?"

"You mentioned last time that you would participate in the auction with our company name instead of your name individually."

"Oh, you are concerned about the bid deposit. I will transfer 300 million won to the business bank account."

"300 million won should be enough since a bid deposit is 10% of the offer price."

"Manager Kang, prepare the company's certificate of a registered seal."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho received a call from the branch manager of the stockbroking firm.

"Hello, President Goo. How have you been? This is the branch manager of the stock brokerage company."

"Oh, hi. How are you?"

"Is it a good time to talk?"

"Yes, it's fine."

"I'm calling to recommend you the stock of Samsung Electronics. That stock seems to be not moving much lately, but the price will surely increase soon in the future because the semiconductor business is still booming."

"Samsung stock is a large-cap stock that moves so slowly... What about the stocks of pharmaceutical companies?"

"Pharmaceutical company stocks are often manipulated by some groups of little people, so I don't recommend it to a big gentle player like you. Haha."

"Hmm, Samsung Electronics..."

"You won't regret it. You will be able to smile after about three months once you buy their stock."

"Okay. Their price per share is about 2,400,000 won. I will buy 1,000 shares then."

"Thank you, sir. By the way, why don't you join me in playing golf in the field?"

"Thank you for asking, but I am not good at playing golf. Have a wonderful day."

Gun-Ho purchased 2,000 shares of Samsung Electronics stock, instead of 1,000 shares.

"I am investing about 5 billion won in this stock. Assuming its stock price increases by only 1% after three months, how much will I make? Haha. It's still about 50 million won."

Gun-Ho transferred the 90 million won to his sister's bank account, that he made from stock investment earlier.

"Sister? I just sent you 90 million won to your account. Have your husband buy the truck."

"You did already? Thank you, Gun-Ho. Thank you. Don't worry about mom and dad. I will take good care of them."

Gun-Ho hung up the phone before she would start crying.

Gun-Ho decided to learn to play golf, so he could expand his social network through it.

"There were so many people who enjoy playing golf and they become closer to each other by playing it together. The branch manager of the stock brokerage company and Attorney Kim from Kim&Jeong, they all play golf. I think I should know how to play it."

Gun-Ho remembered that he saw a comprehensive sports center at the Yangjae four-way intersection; its name was 'Sportime.' Sportime was popular among the middle-aged ladies living in the Gangnam area because they provided a hot spring bath to its members.

"How much do they charge for a membership?"

Gun-Ho called Sportime.

"Sportime? I'm interested in buying a golf membership. How much is it?"

"If you buy a comprehensive membership, you can use all the facilities we provide in our sports center."

"What types of facilities do you have then?"

"We, of course, have an indoor practice facility for golf, and we have a fitness

center, swimming pool, and facilities for bowling and table-tennis. We also offer yoga and dance classes."

"How much is it?"

"Is it for an individual membership or business membership?"

"I'd like to know the price for both."

"Are you going to take a gold membership?"

"Huh? Umm, how much is that?"

"For a business membership, it's 250 million won and for an individual membership, it's 83 million won."

Gun-Ho was astonished by its ridiculously high membership prices.

"Hmm, I see. I will stop by the center soon."

Gun-Ho grumbled after getting off the phone with the sports center.

"It's unreasonably expensive. I don't have money to spend there. Well, I do have money and I can get their membership if I want, but I don't want to spend my money there."

Gun-Ho decided to go somewhere less pricey than Sportime. He bought a three-month membership at the golf indoor facility inside the Education Community Center building. It was a bit far to drive but it was okay.

After spending his mornings at his office, Gun-Ho started going to the indoor practice facility for golf in his Land Rover. He already purchased a set of golf clubs, golf gloves, and golf shoes. Gun-Ho requested a private lesson from a golf coach. The coach who would teach Gun-Ho was a female in her 20s. Gun-Ho was told that the coach had once been a pro golfer. She certainly had a pro golfer's strong arms and physique.

"Is this your first time, sir?"

"Yes, this is my very first time."

"What have you done so far without learning to play golf?"

"I was busy making a living..."

The female coach smiled with her white teeth upon responding to what Gun-Ho was saying. She then opened Gun-Ho's golf bag and pulled out one club from the center of the various clubs in the bag.

"Let's start with this 7-iron."

"Okay."

"Spread your legs shoulder width and relax your wrists."

For the next several days, Gun-Ho practiced golf swing diligently with his 7-iron. However, he didn't see any improvement. He kept missing the golf ball whenever he swung. The coach tried to improve Gun-Ho's posture.

"Don't take your eyes off the ball and move your waist only before hitting the ball. Relax your wrists!"

Gun-Ho hit the golf ball while trying to keep the right posture as the coach instructed.

However, the ball went less than 80 yards.

"Look at how I hit the ball and see the difference between your posture and mine."

The lady coach hit the ball with her hair blowing; her swing was beautiful.

The golf ball that the coach hit flew and reached to the point more than 150 yards far.

"Whoa. That was nice!"

Gun-Ho kept practicing while trying to listen carefully to the coach's instruction and put a lot of efforts to make a nice swing just like the coach did. However, it didn't happen.

"F*ck! I guess I just don't have an aptitude for golf."

Gun-Ho decided to visit China after ending this ridiculous golf lesson.

Gun-Ho called Professor Wang. The phone kept ringing but no one answered it. Maybe professor Wang was in a lecture. After one hour or so, Gun-Ho received a call from Professor Wang.

"President Goo? I'm sorry that I missed your call. I was in the middle of a lecture."

"I'm coming to China to see the industrial complex in Kunshan City. When do you have time?"

"This week is not good, but I am good next week from Wednesday. Come, friend."

"Okay, I will arrive at Hangzhou Xiaoshan Airport next Wednesday then. You don't have to come to pick me up at the airport."

"Sounds good. Call me when you get here."

"Okay, I will see you then."

Gun-Ho arrived at Incheon International Airport.

"How come there are so many people here? It's like a traditional market."

The airports in Korea had become busier and busier every year and now it became so crowded, which was different from the time when Gun-Ho had gone to China for the first time.

Gun-Ho arrived at the Xiaoshan Airport in Hangzhou City. It was a newly constructed airport.

"I can smell China in the air already."

Gun-Ho gave a call to Professor Wang in a taxi. Professor Wang picked up the phone and he sounded sleepy.

"Hey, it's me. Are you at the university? Or home?"

"I'm home right now. Did you arrive? I can get ready quickly. Where are you?"

"Come to Shangri-La Hotel. I will be at the café inside the hotel. Let's have lunch together."

When Gun-Ho arrived at the café in Shangri-La Hotel, Professor Wang was already there waving his hand at Gun-Ho.

"Hey, over here!"

"How did you get here so early?"

"I just arrived."

"You want to go have lunch?"

"Well, it's a bit early for lunch. Let's have a cup of tea here for now."

They had tea while listening to a live saxophone play. The saxophone player was an old gentleman. He was playing an old pop song with his saxophone.

"Nothing much is in the Jinxi Industrial Park right now. They are still in the process of completing 3-Flow work."

"They have a floor plan, right?"

"Yeah, they do have a floor plan for the industrial park. I just talked with Deputy Mayor Li on the phone. He will be at the Business Hotel in Kunshan City tomorrow at 11 AM waiting for us in the lobby. The president of Jinxi Construction Company will join us there as well."

98 Flavors of Life 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho started his day early morning with Professor Wang, heading to Shanghai.

Gun-Ho wanted to rent a car and drive all the way to Shanghai, but Professor Wang talked him out of it and suggested to take an express bus to Shanghai and then take a taxi there to go to Kunshan City.

"Renting a car is too expensive. Let's take an express bus instead, even though it could be a bit uncomfortable."

When they arrived in Shanghai, they took a taxi heading to their final destination, Kunshan City. The taxi was driving on the G2 Jinghu Expressway and they talked about the joint venture.

"Professor Wang, you said you would participate in the joint venture, right?"

"I did, but I am not so sure yet. It might be difficult for me to participate."

Professor Wang sighed.

"What's wrong?"

"I still do want to participate. I intended to take 5% of the share, so Jinxi Construction Company of Kunshan City would take 50%, and a Korean company would take 45%. That was the initial plan."

"Hmm."

"In fact, China usually doesn't divide the share 50:50 when they set up an international joint venture with another country because of the management right. We usually do 51:49. I supposed it's not just China, but other countries are doing the same thing."

"Are they trying to prevent any possible intervention in managing the joint venture from the foreign co-venturer?"

"That's right."

"What is the 5% share about?"

"That was something my friends and I wanted to do for Seukang Li. We wanted to have some shares in the joint venture with the funds we all would contribute and once we make money from it, we would help and support Seukang Li."

"What kind of help or support does Seukang Li need?"

"Seukang Li is a smart and promising man with a bright future. He is an upright person who couldn't easily be corrupted like many other politicians. His grandfather was in the Eighth Route Army and he also participated in the war, and his father used to work as a Hyunjang (corresponding to a county governor in Korea). He is a righteous and respected man."

"What does it have to do with supporting him?"

"We want him to stay as he currently is. While he is working as a high-ranking official, he could encounter a lot of temptation because of money. So, my friends and I wanted to make money by participating in the joint venture and support Seukang Li with the money we would make from it. So he doesn't have to take bribes and stay as a righteous politician as he is now. We are hoping that he grows in the government and becomes a member of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China in the future. He will be our pride and his family's pride, and our town's pride."

"Hmm."

"We have this good intention, but we don't have money. The joint venture will start with 3,000,000 U.S. dollars capital. 5% of 3 million dollars is 150,000 dollars. We have been trying to collect the money but it's not easy to reach that amount."

"Hmm."

"Seukang Li has no idea about our plan. He will get upset if he finds it out. He is stricter than he looks. He was the leader of the Communist Youth League of China. He is a man of great self-respect. He grew up in a highly respected family and graduated from Beijing University. Even so, he started his career from

working in a factory."

"Hmm."

"150,000 dollars is a substantial amount of money in China. Even Alibaba President Marwin—one of the richest men in the world gave an impassioned speech to attract investors because he didn't have 500,000 Yuan."

"So, are you giving up on participating in the joint venture?"

"I think I have to. I am sure that the industrial park will be profitable with even only 50 foreign business entities moving into the industrial park. But it's not easy to make it happen."

"It's easier said than done. It will be truly hard to attract 50 foreign companies. Even in Korea, people say it's hard to succeed in having a business in China."

"We are aware of it. However, the location of this industrial park is really good. The Kunshan City is situated between two major cities: Shanghai and Suzhou. In addition, The City of Kunshan will offer excellent benefits to the foreign companies such as low corporate tax."

"Hmm."

"I believe they will do a presentation in Korea and Japan to attract foreign investors by introducing and explaining the project. However, in my opinion, the foreign companies that are already in China will be very interested. They might be currently facing some difficulties in running their business in China like a ridiculously expensive rent or unreasonable product transportation. So those foreign companies will move their location to Kunshan City."

"Hmm."

"You will see. If the new coming foreign companies are 30% of the entire foreign entities that would move into the industrial park, the remaining 70% will be the ones that were already running a business in China. We are almost there."

When Gun-Ho and Professor Wang entered the Business Hotel lobby, Deputy Mayor Li who was sitting in a chair stood up.

"Hey! Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Hey, Seukang Li. How have you been?"

They greeted each other with a handshake.

"Oh, let me introduce him. This is the president of Jinxi Construction Company of Kunshan City."

The president of the construction company was an overweight man who was wearing glasses. He looked like in his early 50s.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"I'm Chinkkweo Seon."

Professor Wang also had a handshake with the man and exchanged their business cards.

"Gun-Ho! President Seon will show you the Jinxi Industrial Park today. I have an important meeting that I have to attend. After you go see the industrial park, join me for dinner, okay? The dinner tonight will be treated by the City of Kunshan as an official dinner for our guest."

President Seon brought his car. A chauffeur was driving the car. They said it was Buick Excelle; it didn't look very luxurious though.

In Kunshan City, there were many small canals. President Seon explained about it.

"In the past, these canals were used for transportation. This area has a lot of lakes and historic sites. Jinxi Town in Kunshan City where we are heading to is a small town about 90. It's very close to Shanghai City and Suzhou City. Therefore, companies sitting on the Jinxi Industrial Park would save logistics costs. Moreover, its excellent location would allow them to have easy access to the rich labor market."

They arrived at the industrial park. It was almost a vacant land. Red flags were placed here and there on the land and heavy equipment was scooping up soils.

President Seon had the chauffeur stop the car in front of a standing signboard. Once they got off the car, Gun-Ho could see two workers who were wearing yellow construction hats. They were standing in front of the standing signboard with a long stick. The standing signboard turned out to be the bird's eye view of the construction site.

Once President Seon asked the workers to give a briefing, one of the workers started explaining about the construction while pointing things on the standing signboard with his stick.

"Our Jinxi Industrial Park has a size of 695,000 . We are expecting to complete the 3-Flow work by April, 20xx. The total construction cost would be..."

The aerial view of the industrial park looked like a shrimp with a bent back. President Seon took the stick from the worker who was giving a briefing and added more details to their briefing.

"A sewage treatment plant will be built in this part, where wastewater would be disposed of. A management office will be placed in this middle part."

In Gun-Ho's eyes, it would take forever to complete the sewage treatment plant and the road paving.

"The road and the sewage treatment plant will have to be completed before bringing business entities."

As Gun-Ho said this, President Seon of Jinxi Construction Company gave a forced smile.

There was still a lot of time left until the dinnertime that Seukang Li reserved for Gun-Ho. As Gun-Ho looked at his watch on purpose, Professor Wang suggested visiting some tourist places.

"Sure."

President Seon who heard Professor Wang's suggestion volunteered to show them around.

President Seon took them to a water town called Zhouzhuang where Gun-Ho could see ancient canal side residential houses. It was very exotic.

"Whoa, it's beautiful!"

Gun-Ho was impressed by the scenic view. The canal water didn't look so clean but the town seemed to show an ancient Chinese town.

"This is really awesome!"

As Gun-Ho seemed to be very excited, President Seon felt good and asked Gun-Ho.

"Is there a town like this in Korea?"

"We don't really have canals like this in Korea, but we do have many places with beautiful nature and scenic view."

"I know Korea is a highly developed country. I really like to visit the country someday."

Professor Wang said to President Seon while giving him a gentle nudge in the ribs.

"If the joint venture works out well, President Goo will invite you to Korea and show you around."

99 Flavors of Life 2 – PART 2

Deputy Mayor Li took Gun-Ho to a restaurant called 'Hwadongchancehong.'

The restaurant was dazzling. In its huge hall, the tables covered with white table clothes were placed in a very organized way. The tables and chairs looked like Chinese antique furniture. On the ceiling, traditional Chinese paper lanterns decorated with embroidery floss were hanging.

"Whoa, this restaurant is marvelous."

Deputy Mayor Li was not alone. He was with two more persons. He introduced them to Gun-Ho.

"I'm the construction director of Kunshan City."

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Gun-Ho and the construction director exchanged their business cards.

Deputy Mayor Li introduced him to Professor Wang as well.

"President Goo and Professor Wang are my friends."

Deputy Mayor Li introduced the other person to Gun-Ho as well. This man was wearing black sunglasses even if they were inside the building and he looked like in his 30s.

"I am a chauffeur."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to him for a handshake. It looked like he was the chauffeur who was assisting Deputy Mayor Li. There were seven men who would have dinner together at the same table including President Seon of Jinxi Construction Company and his chauffeur.

Chinese food started being set up on Gun-Ho's table. There were deep-fried freshwater crabs, shrimps, etc.

"President Goo, I really had a great time in Korea because of you. The Italian food in Korea was excellent and I also enjoyed the place in Itaewon something."

Professor Wang who was sitting next to him added.

"I'm sure it was Seukang's first time experience in a place like that. Haha."

"What about you, Jien? You didn't have a chance to go to that kind of place since you were so busy studying in the U.S. It should be your first time too."

"Haha. As a matter of fact, it was my first time. I heard there are a lot of good places like it in China too, but I haven't tried them yet."

Deputy Mayor Li collected all the glasses placed on the table in front of him and poured clear liquor in each glass. It was Baijiu that was 50 percent alcohol by volume.

While distributing a glass of Baijiu to everyone at the table, Deputy Mayor Li said,

"In China, we serve three glasses of liquor consecutively to a friend who came a long way to visit. That's our traditional etiquette. So, President Goo has to drink three glasses of liquor consecutively."

Everyone at the table clapped as Deputy Mayor Li said.

After drinking some more of Baijiu, everyone felt good.

"President Goo, what do you think about the industrial park after you went to visit there? We are expecting to complete the road accessing the site by March."

"It looks like it will take longer to pave the road."

"Right, the road pavement might take longer, especially when we will have Lunar New Year's Day before March. However, I will press them to finish the construction as soon as they can."

"We will have to prepare very well the presentation to attract more investors, with enough information and supporting documents. I believe we will have to bring the pictures of the completed sewage treatment plant and paved roads."

"You're absolutely right. We will finish the construction as soon as possible."

Deputy Mayor Li told the city construction director and President Seon of the construction company.

"Did you hear what President Goo from Korea just said? As we planned earlier, let's complete the construction for the 3-Flow work and sewage treatment plant as soon as possible."

The city construction director and President Seon of the construction company nodded their heads, showing their agreement.

Professor Wang poured liquor in Gun-Ho's empty glass. Gun-Ho took his glass and asked,

"Deputy Mayor Li, I have one more question. I'm sorry that I am asking too many questions."

"No, you should ask all the questions you have. A businessman should do that."

"As to the capital of 3 million dollars for the industrial park, will China invest in cash as well?"

"No, China will invest in kind."

"Hmm."

Professor Wang added more explanation on behalf of Deputy Mayor Li.

"Do you remember the management office to be built in the middle area of the industrial park? That's the investment from China."

"Will that cost half of 3 million dollars? 1.5 million dollars?"

"Of course. The size of the land is about 5 moo (about 1,000 pyung) and they will build an office there, which will be used as a management office."

"Hmm."

"We will finish the business plan before Lunar New Year's Day."

The president of the construction company chipped in,

"Our company is actually working on the business plan."

"Hey, Gun-Ho! Let's talk more about the joint venture once the business plan is completed. Now, let's have a drink and have a good time together."

Deputy Mayor Li lifted his glass and clinked to everyone's glass.

It was the returning day to Korea for Gun-Ho after he spent two nights and three days in China. Gun-Ho purchased Chinese liquor, cigarette and other things at the duty-free shop at the Pudong airport before he boarded the Asiana flight. The passengers consisted of mostly Korean businessmen who were doing business in China and Korean company employees who were working in a branch office in China. There were some international students and Chinese people as well. There were also old tourists in the backside of the flight; they were noisy. Gun-Ho leaned back in his seat, closed his eyes and thought about whether he should participate in the joint venture.

'Since China will invest in kind, all the expenses such as wages of the workers in the joint venture will be paid with the funds invested by a Korean company who would invest money. And once companies start coming in, they will use that money, which those companies would pay to run the business.'

Gun-Ho fastened his safety belt when he heard the in-flight announcement that instructed him to do so, and continued thinking.

'This type of joint venture does not require huge funds to start and to run. So they don't really need a co-venturer for the funds. However, if they set up a joint venture with a Korean company, it will be easier to attract more Korean companies into their industrial park.'

The payments from the companies who are coming into the industrial park will be taken by Jinxi Construction Company. So, the Korean company co-venturer is more like an agency to sell the lots and factories, and it would also do the management in the future. If so, I can't make a lot of money from participating in this joint venture. Professor Wang said that this is not hitting a jackpot, but it is definitely a Cash Cow business.'

The flight started running on the runway.

'For a joint venture, the capital to invest is kind of low. I can have 50% of share with only 1.5 billion won. Seukang Li will keep growing in his career in the Chinese government. Should I stay in business with him and have a good relationship with him? So I might receive a big help from him someday in the future?'

Gun-Ho made up his mind. He decided to invest in the joint venture not for money but for Kkwansi, a close network with Seukang Li. However, he didn't want to lose money either. He would thoroughly review the plan and make it successful.

Gun-Ho was elegantly thinking of his business and friendship when the Korean men in their 50s who were sitting next to Gun-Ho started talking loudly. Gun-Ho wanted to tell them to be quiet but he didn't because he didn't want to make a scene. They were a group of Korean men who looked nasty and talked nasty.

"Sh*t! It's f*cking hard to make money in China. I couldn't send even a penny to my family in Korea for the past year."

"I received all kinds of inspections to my small factory like an environmental inspection, a fire system inspection, and hygiene inspection. There were f*cking too much."

"The salary I am receiving from the Korean company in Korea, the Chinese people tried to take some income tax from it. F*ck!"

"Mine too."

"Sh*t, people like us who work f*cking hard in China don't make money, and this Asiana air makes money because of us."

"Maybe we should have taken China Eastern Airline. It's cheap."

"China Eastern Airline is not comfortable."

"This f*cking Asiana should lower their fare."

"I heard the president of Asiana is fighting with his brother. Maybe it's about who will take over the company."

"That's the f*cking problem of rich people."

Those men talked a lot in a loud voice for a while before they fell asleep after having an in-flight meal.

Gun-Ho looked at the white clouds outside the window.

"Money... Money is good, of course. If I become extremely rich, would I get into a fight to take more money? How much money do they need to stop fighting between brothers? There were fights between family members in an extremely rich family such as Lotte and Kumho Asiana, and also Samsung and Hyundai had a nasty fight some time ago too."

Gun-Ho had mixed feelings and kept staring at the clouds outside the window.

100 Conversation with a Wise Man 1

– PART 1

Gun-Ho decided to raise the capital of GH Development by issuing new stock; otherwise, his company would look too small with its currently small capital and annual sales. He would raise the initial capital of 300 million won to 1 billion won. That way, Gun-Ho's company would look better when joining the joint venture.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong."

"Yes?"

"Do you remember that time when we acquired three OneRoomTels, I added my personal funds to the company's capital of 300 million in order to make enough funds to buy them? And you recorded it as a fund that came from the company CEO, right?"

"Yes, I did."

"We are going to raise our company's capital to 1 billion won. I've already deposited an additional 300 million won to our major business bank account. So use the 300 million I just deposited and some of the funds that were previously added when we acquired the OneRoomTels to raise our capital to 1 billion won. Why don't you go to the certified legal consultant's office this afternoon?"

"Sure, I will do that."

"They will draft the board minutes to issue shares. That office helped me establish this company so they are aware of our business. Ask them what documents we need to prepare."

"Okay."

Manager Kang asked,

"Umm, sir. You are raising the capital because of that vacant lot in Gangdong District, right?"

"No, I've been thinking about it and decided to purchase that land under my name rather than using the company name. If the company retains 50% of the property interest, the other property owner would possibly try to sell to us at a higher price."

"Hmm, that's true. Then why do you raise the capital?"

"Let's acquire one more OneRoomTel. We will set up a joint venture with China, and our company's capital and annual sales are too small to be the co-venturer."

"A joint venture with China?"

Manager Kang and Ji-Young looked at each other in surprise.

After talking on the phone with the certified legal consultant's office, Ji-Young made a report to Gun-Ho.

"They said they need the company directors' certificate of a registered seal and registered stamp, that would include yours, sir."

"I will prepare them. They might need the stamp for power of attorney or a consent statement. I will bring them."

"They said they already have the articles of incorporation, and a list of directors in their office."

"Of course."

"I will prepare bank statements and the company's certificate of a registered seal."

"Okay, please do so."

Gun-Ho had listed his father and himself as directors of GH Development when he formed the company. Gun-Ho called his father.

"Dad? I need two copies of your certificate of a registered seal. I need them to

issue new shares of the company."

"I need to go to the township office to get those documents. I'm at the Tapgol Park in Jongno 3-ga District right now."

"Tapgol Park? Then you can get them tomorrow then."

"I can mail it to you tomorrow."

"That's okay. I need your stamp as well, so I will come by home tomorrow to pick them up."

"You don't have to waste your time on the trip; you are a busy person. I will bring them to your office tomorrow."

"Okay, then. You need to take the subway line 1 in Incheon then change to line 2 at Sindorim Station and get off at Gangnam Subway Station."

"Get off where?"

"Gangnam Subway Station, dad. I will see you at the exit 8."

"Okay."

"Let's have lunch together. Come by noon. I will see you tomorrow, dad."

Gun-Ho made a call to Jong-Suk. It had been a while since he talked with him.

Jong-Suk and Suk-Ho in Gyeongridan Street hadn't called Gun-Ho lately. They seemed to feel distant from Gun-Ho.

"Jong-Suk? It's me."

"Bro! What's up? I know you are busy."

"Why haven't you called me lately since you got promoted to a manager?"

"I didn't want to bother you, bro. I know you are busy."

"You, jacka*s, you should be calling your bro sometimes. I thought you passed away."

"I'm very much alive. I'm doing fine even though I have to work with all these machine lubricant oils."

"Do you still go to the fishing site?"

"Yeah, sometimes."

"Does Chairman Lee come to the fishing site as well?"

"Yeah, he still does."

"Do you want to go fishing with me this Sunday?"

"Don't you have to play golf?"

"Who would play golf every single day? And I don't play golf well at all!"

"Okay. I will be there at 11 AM this Sunday then."

It was almost noon and Gun-Ho went to the exit 8 at Gangnam Subway Station.

"Huh? It started raining!"

Gun-Ho ran to Gangnam Subway Station. Gun-Ho's father was hunkering down at the exit 8 in the rain.

"Dad! What are you doing here? Why are you in the rain? Come here."

"I was worried that you might not see me if I wait inside, son."

"I can find you, dad. Don't stay in the rain. Did you bring the documents?"

Gun-Ho's father pulled out the certificate of a registered seal and his registered stamp.

"This is good. You haven't had lunch yet, right? Let's go and have lunch together."

"Are you not busy? I ate my breakfast late so I don't have to eat now. You can go back to your office and work. I'm okay."

"Dad, let's go!"

Gun-Ho took his father to a Japanese restaurant.

"This restaurant looks so expensive. Let's go somewhere else."

"Dad, it's okay. Have a seat. What would you like to have?"

"Huh? I will just have a buckwheat noodle."

"Have something delicious, dad. Don't worry about the price."

"No, I'm good. I do like buckwheat noodle. It digests easily."

Gun-Ho ordered buckwheat noodles and Sushi.

"Dad, since it's raining, why don't you have a drink? Since I have to go back to the office, I will have half a glass of liquor."

The buckwheat noodles and Sushi came out. The noodles looked too much for Gun-Ho's father, but he ate them all. His father finished a bottle of Cheongha as well. Gun-Ho's father looked happy, and he kept smiling while looking at Gun-Ho.

"How are my sister and her husband?"

"They are doing fine. Your brother-in-law bought the 4-ton truck and already started working at Hite Jinro. You know the truck with wings."

"That's good."

"Your sister changed her work since your brother-in-law is already making money."

"To where?"

"They do some kind of selection of clothes or something somewhere. She's working part-time, and she started studying since she has spare time now."

"Study? Study what?"

"She said she wants to obtain a level-2 certificate of a social worker."

"Hmm, really? I guess a social worker is in high demand."

"I was going to Tapgol Park after seeing you here, but I think I'd better go home since it's raining."

Gun-Ho and his father walked out of the restaurant after finishing their lunch with a coffee.

"Dad, be careful on your way home, and have a drink with your friends with this."

"Huh? What is this!? I can't take it."

Gun-Ho slipped an envelope with money in it into his father's pocket and ran to his office.

Ji-Young brought the company's newly issued certificate of formation to Gun-Ho, which reflected the new changes with capital and shares.

"It's done, and here is the new certificate of formation of the company."

"Hmm. Thank you."

Ji-Young placed the two directors' certificate of registered seals and registered stamps on Gun-Ho's desk as well.

"Since the company's capital has officially been raised, Manager Kang, please look for another OneRoomTel to acquire."

"Yes, sir. Actually, I saw one in Yeoksam Town that is on the market, and it seems good. I will go and visit it."

"How are the residential managers doing?"

"They are doing good. A new residential manager is working now at the Daechi town location because the resident manager quit it."

"Was it easy to find a new residential manager?"

"Yes, I am sure we would receive a lot of applications if we placed a job advertisement on a job posting site such as Albamon because the economy is still not doing well. However, for the Daechi Town location, we hired the person who the previous residential manager recommended; he said that person was his friend."

"How do you handle when a residential manager needs a vacation or a few days off?"

"They handled the situation by themselves. They ask someone to do the job while they were not present, such as their family members or friends."

"Hmm."

"I think we should consider hiring one more residential manager once we acquire the fourth OneRoomTel. So, we will have five residential managers for our four OneRoomTels."

"Hmm."

"I know we have to pay for the additional residential manager, but that would take care of a situation where a residential manager would need a few days off or so."

"Hmm, let's think about it. For now, let's focus on buying the fourth OneRoomTel. Let me know once you visit the OneRoomTel in Yeoksam Town."

"Okay, sir."

101 Conversation with a Wise Man 1

– PART 2

It was a Sunday.

Gun-Ho headed to the Pocheon fishing site with his fishing gears. It had been a long time.

"I will take Dongbu Expressway which will have less traffic since it is Sunday."

Gun-Ho drove on the expressway and passed Sohol Town and Pocheon City.

"I like the view in this area. It's different from the one in the southern part of Gyeonggi Province."

Gun-Ho finally arrived at the fishing site he often used to come, after passing Yeongjung Town.

There were several cars that were parked.

"That's Jong-Suk's car. Oh, that Genesis is probably Chairman Lee's car, I guess."

Gun-Ho walked down to the lake while looking around.

He could see Chairman Lee in the distance; he was casting the fishing rod into the water.

"Chairman Lee, how are you?"

"Oh, President Goo!"

Chairman Lee stood up while extending his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"How have you been, sir? You look well."

"It has been a while. What made you come all the way here today? Your friend is

doing lure fishing across the lake."

"I see him from here. Oh, he looks like he saw me too. He is waving at me. Haha."

"It seems like he came here early. He already caught two basses."

"Really? Is Manager Gweon here with you? I don't see him."

"There he is."

Manager Gweon was walking toward Gun-Ho and Chairman Lee. He seemed to be on his way back from the bathroom; he was arranging his belt while walking.

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. How have you been? I heard you opened a company?"

"Yes, I did. It's a small real estate company."

Chairman Lee didn't chip into the conversation, but he just smiled.

"Since I do lure fishing, I will join my friend over there on the other side of the lake."

"Sure. Enjoy your fishing."

Gun-Ho was about to leave the spot when he turned around and said,

"I bought some Gimbab and Jokbal* on the way here. I will come here after an hour or so with the food."

Manager Gweon said while attaching bait to the hook,

"You can't fully enjoy Jokbal without soju."

"I brought soju as well."

Chairman Lee just kept smiling.

"Bro, come here. That area is wet."

"Hey, you came early today?"

"Yeah, about an hour ago. I already caught two huge fish."

"Whoa, fish is biting today, huh? Since you already caught two within the first hour."

"This fishing site is far from your place, isn't it? When you lived around here, it was easy to come here. Now you have to make up your mind to come here."

"That's okay. It's simple driving on a nice road."

"Did you see Chairman Lee?"

"Yeah. He looks the same. I know he lives in Cheongdam Town, but he comes all the way here to fish."

"Yeah, I already asked him about that, why he would come here because there have to be other good fishing sites close to his home."

"And?"

"He said that he has a vacation home in Pocheon. Moreover, he said his fate is made of fire so he needs to come to the places near water, something like that. I have no idea what he is talking about."

"I guess he is an old man so he believes things like that."

"How's your company, bro?"

"I'm not even sure if I can call it a company because it is a tiny office with only two employees."

"Bro, Suk-Ho bro told me that you own three OneRoomTels. Besides, you purchased a condo in Gangnam at your age. You are moving up so fast. My dad already knew that you bought a condo for your parents."

"Huh? How does he know? I don't think your father has ever met my parents before. They don't know each other."

"My father knows I am close to you."

"Even so, how does he know?"

"I don't know. My father is running a restaurant, and I know he is nosy."

"Hahaha."

"Hey, bro. Isn't there any place for me to squeeze in at your company?"

"F*ck off, man."

"I am a manager in my current company, but the job is not secure. The company is so small, and I think they are having a financial problem."

"Why do you say so? Don't they pay you on time?"

"They have been paying me on time so far, but the president is often borrowing money from a bank."

"A bank doesn't lend money to anyone without eligibility. If your president could borrow money from a bank, that means his company is doing okay enough to pay the loan back in the future. How much do you get paid?"

"Not much even after I got promoted to a manager. It's less than 3 million won. It's 2.6."

"What about the bonus?"

"400%"

"Hey, then you are getting way more than 40 million won per year. Manager Kang who is working at my company is being paid less than you, man."

"I've been in the field for six years already. And people call me 'MacGyver Park,' you know that."

"There is no easy job. Let's go to the spot across the lake and have Jokbal. I brought Gimbab and Jokbal."

"Jokbal? I love you, bro. That is the sweetest word you have said today."

Jong-Suk smiled with his white healthy teeth.

"Jong-Suk, lay out the picnic mat on the grass here. I brought some newspapers

too. Place them first before setting up the food."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk prepared the place to eat.

"Chairman Lee, please come and have a seat here."

Chairman Lee said while standing up,

"Do you have enough food for us too? We are four people now."

"Don't worry about it. I brought a lot. There is Korean pancake with spring onions and Gimbab too."

Four people had a picnic that day. It was late autumn, and Gun-Ho could feel a cool breeze on his cheeks. They started to eat their food and drink their soju while sitting on the grass beside the lake. Chairman Lee ate only one Jokbal with half a cup of soju; he said he was feeling a bit uncomfortable in the stomach.

"This Gimbab is so tasty."

Chairman Lee ate Gimbab though. The other three men devoured the Jokbal and soju.

They gulped down the soju that was in a paper cup. Chairman Lee was smiling quietly.

Reeds were swaying in the breeze. A combat plane was passing by in the blue sky.

"Since this area is close to North Korea, we could see a lot of combat planes here."

Manager Gweon said while looking up the sky. Gun-Ho followed his gaze and asked him.

"When I climbed up Gwanak Mountain, I saw many commercial planes passing by. There is no commercial plane around here, right?"

"I don't think so. The flight path for commercial planes is leading them toward Gwanak Mountain, Gimpo City or Yeongjong Island."

"Bro, when you went to China last time, which airline did you take? Is it Korean Air that goes to China?"

"No, there are several different airlines you can take for China. There are Asiana Air, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, etc."

"I do like Asiana Air. It's clean, and their stewardesses are pretty."

Everyone laughed together when Jong-Suk said it.

"Oh, I heard Asiana Air's owner brothers are having a fight. People sitting next to me talked about it in the flight from Shanghai to Korea."

Manager Gweon looked surprised when he heard Gun-Ho talking about Asiana Air.

"Really? I have their stock. I will have to sell it right away!"

Jong-Suk chipped in while chewing the Jokbal.

"If the owner brothers fight each other, the employees cannot focus on their work. I've worked as an employee for a long time, I know that by experience."

"You're right. I will sell the stock tomorrow."

Chairman Lee clicked his tongue after listening to their conversation quietly.

Manager Gweon looked at Chairman Lee.

"Look, why would you sell your stock when the company owner brothers are fighting each other?"

"Because if the owner or upper management can't manage the company with stability, the ship goes to a mountain, doesn't it?"

Chairman Lee clicked his tongue again.

Gun-Ho and Jong Suk looked at Chairman Lee. They couldn't understand why he was doing it.

"Oh, that is it!"

Gun-Ho slapped his lap. Something flashed through Gun-Ho's mind.

"That's right. I guess President Goo figured it out."

Chairman Lee smiled quietly.

Note*

Jokbal – Korean dish made of pig's trotters with soy sauce.

102 Conversation with a Wise Man 2

– PART 1

Manager Gweon and Jong-Suk didn't understand why Manager Gweon shouldn't sell his Asiana stock. They were just looking at Chairman Lee and Gun-Ho one after the other.

"President Goo, why don't you explain to them? You seemed to know the reason."

Manager Gweon and Jong-Suk looked at Gun-Ho.

"Okay, this is what I think. When two brothers are fighting over a company, each of them would try to gather the company's shares as many as he could so he could gain more power. More shares he retains, more power he could gain in controlling the company. If that happens, that company's stock would be in high demand, and the price will increase."

"Hmm."

Manager Gweon nodded his head while Jong-Suk had a puzzled look on his face.

Once Manager Gweon digested Gun-Ho's explanation, he asked Chairman Lee.

"Sir, I heard that Kumho Asiana Group is divided into two for operating-wise, and the older brother manages Kumho Construction and Asiana Air, and the younger brother manages Kumho Chemical. In this case, I'd better buy the older brother's company stock, don't I? Because the older brother should have more shares now."

"You think so?"

"The stock I have is Asiana Air. I have 20 million won worth of Asiana Air's stock. Do you think I should buy more of the same stock?"

"That was just a theory. We never know what would actually happen in the stock market."

"I think you are right and it makes sense to me."

Instead of answering Manager Gweon's question, Chairman Lee asked the question to Gun-Ho.

"What do you think, President Goo? Would you bet on the older brother? Or the younger brother?"

"Well, I would also bet on the older brother. What do you think?"

"Hmm, really?"

Chairman Lee drank water instead of soju in a paper cup.

"As I said, we just don't know what would happen in the stock market. The brothers might reconcile tomorrow, or there could be another group of interest who would try to influence the stock's price or the power competition. However, when I was little, the elders in my town used to say this."

Everyone looked at Chairman Lee with all ears.

"Inherently, an older brother has greed and a younger brother has ambition. Whom you would bet on is up to you. However, stay away from the stock market if you could. Hahaha."

Chairman Lee laughed loudly while looking at the lake.

Gun-Ho's eyes widened and looked at Chairman Lee.

'He is truly a wise man.'

Jong-Suk chuckled while pouring soju in each person's paper cup.

"Well, I don't do stocks anyway! I don't have to worry about any of these. Having no stock gives me a better life! Let's just drink."

Chairman Lee smiled at what Jong-Suk said.

Gun-Ho opened the stock trading website when he came to work in the morning.

"I will bet on the younger brother. I will invest 3 billion won in Kumho Chemical today."

Gun-Ho had always been quick in making a decision. He was quicker than others. If he determined something that he was certain about, he just went for it without hesitation or without giving a second thought. That differentiated him from others. Jong-Suk didn't pay attention when Chairman Lee was talking in the fishing site, but Gun-Ho was different. He picked up what he needed to hear, used it during his decision-making process, and quickly put his decision into action.

"I have certainty."

Gun-Ho thought it was okay to invest a substantial amount of money in a large-cap stock like Kumho Chemical as long as there was a certainty. It was a lot safer than putting money in penny stocks or garbage stocks.

Gun-Ho had invested 7 billion won in Kumho Chemical over the one week period. Whenever he saw a red candlestick, he purchased the stock some now and some later at a different price. Gun-Ho quickly decided and made it happen.

"I have the Samsung Electronics stock that I put 3 billion won in it. Should I sell it and invest the proceeds in the Kumho Chemical stock?"

Gun-Ho pondered over whether he should keep the Samsung Electronics stock or sell it to invest more in Kumho Chemical.

"I know I shouldn't put all my eggs in one basket. I could lose everything."

Gun-Ho felt suffocated.

"A human being still feels anxious and nervous even though he has a lot of money."

Gun-Ho walked out of his office and went to a sauna. He closed his eyes with a towel on his head and got lost in thought.

"Should I sell the Samsung Electronics stock?"

Gun-Ho stayed there for quite a while and then suddenly jumped to his feet. The steam came out through his body.

"I will sell the Samsung Electronics stock and put the proceeds in Kumho Chemical!"

Gun-Ho sold all his shares of Samsung Electronics and purchased more shares of Kumho Chemical. The total amount of money he invested in Kumho Chemical was 10 billion won.

"I will leave it there for a year."

Gun-Ho went to Yeoksam Town with Manager Kang to see the OneRoomTel that was on the market for sale. The OneRoomTel had 45 furnished rooms with a shower facility. The room was being rented out for 450,000 won per room. According to the current residential manager, its vacancy rate was less than 10%. The rent that was being paid to the building owner was high but other than that, it looked good.

"I will take it."

"Okay, sir."

Manager Kang handled the sales and purchase agreement and paid the premium to the previous OneRoomTel owner.

When the residential manager was packing his belongings, Manager Kang said to him.

"Where do you think you're going? Aren't you going to continue working here?"

The residential manager dropped his bag right away; he looked delighted.

"I will work hard, sir."

"This OneRoomTel will be operated by a company, not by an individual, so we will need your resume and resident registration. Can you send them to us by tomorrow?"

"Sure. I will prepare the paperwork right away."

Manager Kang became busy in managing four OneRoomTels in Gangnam because he was the point of contact for the residential managers from four different OneRoomTels for any requests, concerns, and questions.

"Manager Kang? We have three bulbs that were burned out. We need to replace them with new bulbs."

"Manager Kang? The credit card processing machine stopped working for some reason."

"Manager Kang? The building owner wants to talk to you."

"Manager Kang? I need to take a day off tomorrow. I have an exam tomorrow."

Gun-Ho called for Manager Kang.

"Manager Kang. Let's hire one more residential manager who could work whenever one of our residential managers has to take some time off and also assist your work."

"Okay, sir. Umm, sir... Is it okay with you if I hire someone who's a bit old rather than a young man for the new residential manager position?"

"Why?"

"I have a relative who has been living by herself since her husband passed away. She is 55 years old. She will of course work at one of our OneRoomTels whenever necessary, and also I want her to clean the OneRoomTels regularly."

"Don't our current residential managers do the cleaning job?"

"They do, but they are not doing a very good job. They don't sort waste in the right way and their floor cleaning work is not satisfying. Young people, these days are not very good at those works."

"Shouldn't we pay her a lot? She will sometimes have to work at night. If she is a homemaker, do you think she can handle the work?"

"She has one son who is in the military right now. I believe she can do it. And you can pay her the same amount you pay to our current residential managers."

"Hmm, you do so then. You will have to manage her as well."

"Okay, sir. Oh, one more thing. The third auction day for the vacant lot in Gangdong District is the day after tomorrow."

It was the third auction day for the vacant lot in Gangdong District.

Gun-Ho went to the Seoul Eastern District Court accompanied by Manager Kang. The court parking lot was full, maybe because a lot of people were participating in auctions today.

Some people were handing out informational flyers at the court entrance, and some people were distributing advertisement flyers that said 'Loan for auction.'

"You said, the starting price is 2.88 billion won, right?"

"That's correct."

"For the bid deposit, I prepared a check of 28.8 million won, which is 10% of the starting price. Also, I brought two of 10 million and ten of 1 million won."

"That's good."

"I guess we are the only one bidding on this land. We can then offer 2.985 billion won. What do you think?"

"If there is no competitor at all, I think we can go with 2.981 billion won."

"Hmm."

"I will go and see if there is anyone who is putting a hand on that vacant lot."

"Okay."

103 Conversation with a Wise Man 2

– PART 2

All offers had been submitted. The bailiff was announcing the auction result.

"Case number 000, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo who offered 2,981 million won the auction. Please come forward with your photo ID."

"Whoa, 2.9 billion won?"

People who were sitting in the front area whispered about the high price that Gun-Ho offered and that he had to pay.

Gun-Ho now owned 50% of the 200 pyung land in Gangdong District, which had been used as a parking lot.

After the mandatory period of the filing of the appeal passed, Gun-Ho wanted to meet the other owner who owned the equal property interest in the land.

"Where can I find him? Should I ask that realtor who was talking about this vacant lot during the auction school gathering?"

Gun-Ho wanted to call the auction private institution and ask that realtor's contact number when Manager Kang walked into the office.

"Manager Kang, do you know how we can find the other owner of that land in Gangdong District? The address shown on the real estate registration is Sampung condo in Seocho Town."

"That doesn't necessarily mean the owner is actually living there. I will go to the realtor's office in front of that vacant lot. Since there are tenants there, the owner probably used the same realtor's office that is close to the land for the lease agreements."

"Okay, then let me know if you find anything."

"Okay, I'll do that."

Manager Kang returned to the office after visiting the land area.

"I talked with the realtor and with the parking lot owner. They said the landowner is actually residing at the Sampung condo in Seocho Town."

"The Sampung condo is the one close to our office, next to the subway station of Seoul National University of Education, right?"

"That's right. The owner and his wife are living in that condo, and their son is living in Mapo Town. Their son is a theatre actor as well."

"A play?"

"Why don't you meet with him?"

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang headed to the Sampung condo to meet the other owner of the land while carrying a box of healthy organic juice.

"Sir, even if this condo looks old, it is still quite expensive because of the location. It's right in the center of Gangnam."

"Really?"

When they arrived at the door of the land owner's condo, they rang the doorbell. No one came out. They tried again. It was still quiet.

"Probably no one is home. Should we just go and come back later? We don't even have his phone number."

They were about to leave when the door was open.

"Who is it?"

An old man who looked like in his 80s came out. He had age spots on his face, and he was wearing pajamas.

"Hello, sir. Are you Mr. Hak-Chul Jang?"

"Yes, I am. Who are you?"

"I am the one who just purchased the land in Gangdong District at the auction."

"I'd like to talk to you for just a moment."

"Hmm, really? Come on inside."

"Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang entered the condo and sat in the living room. There were an old wall clock and an old oriental painting hanging on the wall. It indeed looked like a place where only old people lived in.

"I'm sorry for the mess. I didn't expect anyone so..."

"Please don't mind us. We are good."

"My wife is in a hospital right now, so I am here alone, and I just woke up. What can I get you for a drink?"

"We are good. Thank you, sir. Actually, we brought some drink for you."

The old man went to his kitchen and brought hot green tea.

"So, do you have something you want to do with the land?"

"I'm thinking of building an office-tel. I was wondering if you would sell your property interest to me."

"I'm not selling it."

Manager Kang put his cup of green tea on the coffee table and said.

"Sir, you probably have children and grandchildren and so. Why don't you sell your interest in land and give some of the proceeds to your descendants and enjoy the rest of your life with your wife?"

"I'm not selling. Just have a cup of green tea and go home. Haha."

It seemed like the old man did not need money. He seemed to have enough money and didn't have any reason to sell the land now.

"How many children do you have, sir? I guess they are probably about our age."

"I have a son and two daughters. They do make their living just fine."

"I heard your son is acting at a theatre."

"That's right."

The old man said bluntly. He might not like what his son was doing.

"Are your daughters living around here?"

"No, one is living in Incheon City, and the other one is living in Banpo Town."

"Did you say Incheon? My parents are in Incheon."

The old man didn't seem to be glad to hear it.

Gun-Ho thought the old man seemed to disapprove of things that their children were doing.

"I'm sorry, sir if this sounds offensive, but you don't take the land when your time comes, right? Why don't you sell it when there is someone who wants to buy it? You can't really utilize the land with your 50% interest either."

"The half of the rent from the tenants there is coming to my bank account."

"It's not much, you know that. Please sell it to me."

"I'm not selling it. I won't change my mind, so please leave once you've finished your tea."

"Okay, sir, if you insist. Let me at least have your phone number, sir."

The owner gave his number to Gun-Ho.

"I will leave Manager Kang's business card with you."

Gun-Ho didn't give his business card to the old man. The old man stared at Manager Kang's business card for a while.

"Manager Kang, let's do this. We won't be able to fully use this land since we have half of the property interest in it, so let's use it as collateral when we need

to borrow money from a bank."

"Okay, since it has the appraised value, a bank will certainly lend money with this land."

"Okay, then. Sir, have a wonderful day. If you happen to change your mind, please let us know any time."

The old man seemed to be thinking about something.

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang walked out of the condo and went to a soft tofu stew restaurant around the Sampung condo.

Manager Kang talked first while having his soft tofu stew.

"The old man doesn't want to sell the land."

"I think he will sell it. One of his children would face some financial difficulties in his or her life and also he knows he couldn't take the land with him to his grave. He was just trying to raise the price."

"Then, should we contact him after one or two weeks?"

"What about... we meet his son who is acting at a theater?"

"I think that's a good idea. Do you want me to find him?"

Gun-Ho received an unexpected call from Attorney Kim who was working at Kim&Jeong.

"How have you been? I talked with Professor Wang at Zhejiang University the other day, and he has some spare time these days since the exam period at the university is over. I am calling to ask you if you would like to join me in playing golf in China. I haven't played golf in China before. I heard their golf field is really nice."

"Haha. Actually, I am not a good golf player. I'm learning it these days though."

"Oh, are you?"

Attorney Kim sounded disappointed a bit.

"Where do you go for golf practice?"

"I'm taking lessons at the indoor facility inside the Education Community Center building."

"I see. Good luck then. I will go with you when you go to the field for the first time."

"Haha, thank you."

Gun-Ho hadn't played golf for the past several days.

"I will have to practice diligently. I have a golf buddy now who would share my first experience at a golf field."

Gun-Ho walked out of the office and headed to the golf practice facility.

He was practicing with his 7-iron when the coach lady approached him.

"Sir, why didn't you come to your lesson last time? You have to keep practicing; otherwise, you won't improve."

"I won't miss it again."

Gun-Ho stopped his swing and smiled broadly.

"Do your arms like this, and grab the grip this way with your hand."

The coach held Gun-Ho's arm to correct his posture. Gun-Ho could smell her lotion.

"Let's practice today until a blister starts appearing on your hand."

"Okay!"

After a while, Gun-Ho started sweating.

"Hmm, this small golf swing movement makes me sweat."

The coach came back to Gun-Ho.

"When you address the ball, stretch your left arm lightly and bend your right arm."

"It's more difficult than it sounds."

Gun-Ho hit the golf ball.

"At impact, don't lift your head."

"Okay."

"Your weight should be on your left foot. Hit the ball again."

Gun-Ho hit the ball again and the ball flew.

"It's getting better."

The ball flew farther than last time. Gun-Ho felt good. From that day, Gun-Ho came to the indoor golf facility every day to practice his swing.

104 Buying Out The Other Tenant in Common – PART 1

Gun-Ho waited two weeks before he called the co-tenant of that vacant lot he purchased at the auction, that was being held in tenancy in common. That co-tenant was holding 50% of the property interest in the land.

"Sir, I am the person who met with you the other day at your home, the one who purchased the other half of the property interest in the land that is located in Gangdong District. Have you thought about selling your interest?"

"I'm not selling."

"Sir, you can give a better life to your children with the proceeds you could make by selling it. Why don't you sell it to us at a reasonable price?"

"I said I'm not selling it."

"Then, let's do this. Why don't you buy my property interest then? To raise the value of the land and to fully utilize the land, we need to terminate the tenancy in common. That's another way to work out if you don't want to sell your interest."

"I don't have money to buy out."

"You are saying that you don't want to sell and you don't want to buy either. You seem to have no intention to make it work. You are just stubbornly holding the land."

The old man didn't say anything. Gun-Ho could only hear him breathing over the phone.

"Sir, let me buy you lunch tomorrow. I know a restaurant close to your Sampung condo. A soft tofu stew is really tasty there. I'd like to see you there at 1 pm tomorrow. What do you say?"

"Suit yourself."

Manager Kang was listening to the phone conversation between Gun-Ho and the co-owner of the land. When Gun-Ho got off the phone with the old man, he asked Gun-Ho.

"What did he say?"

"I asked him to have lunch with me tomorrow and he told me to suit myself and hung up the phone."

"That's good. He meant okay about having lunch tomorrow."

"Do you think he would come tomorrow?"

"I'm sure he will. I will go with you tomorrow."

A mailman walked in the office.

"Is Mr. Gun-Ho Goo here?"

"It's me."

"We have an international express mail for you. Please sign here."

The mailman handed an electronic signature device to Gun-Ho.

It was from President Chinkkweo Seon of Jinxi Construction Company in Kunshan City, China.

"What did he send to me?"

Gun-Ho opened the mail and found 7-pages of A4 papers. It was the business plan of Jinxi Industrial Park.

"Business Plan!"

Gun-Ho started reading it until he realized that he had to refer it to a Chinese-Korean dictionary because there were so many Chinese words he didn't understand. Gun-Ho placed the business plan on his desk and Manager Kang asked after he looked at the document.

"What is this?"

"It's a business plan."

Gun-Ho tried to translate the business plan referring to the dictionary and then decided to ask someone to do the job for him; he didn't want to spend time in translation work. He then placed a job posting on a translation web community online.

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang went to the soft tofu stew restaurant close to the Sampung condo in order to meet the co-owner of the vacant lot in Gangdong District in the afternoon.

"He is not here yet, I guess."

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang sat at a table and drank a cup of water when the old man entered the restaurant. There was a man of sturdy build who looked like in his 40s, behind the old man. The man had a curly hair and beard, and he looked just like Ou-Joon Kim who was a film producer and the founder of the online newspaper—Ddanzi.

"Hello, sir?"

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang stood up and greeted the old man with respect by giving a 90-degree bow.

"This is my son."

Gun-Ho thought that he was the son who was acting at a theatre, and Gun-Ho and Manager Kang gave the son a 90-degree bow as well.

"We haven't ordered food yet."

"The popular menu of this restaurant is a soybean stew."

"Oh, really? Then would you like to have a soybean stew, a pork & soft tofu, and a mung bean pancake?"

"Suit yourself."

The dishes that Gun-Ho ordered came out; it was neat and nicely presented.

"Sir, would you like to have a glass of liquor?"

"No, thank you. I'm good."

Gun-Ho still ordered a bottle of soju.

"Why don't you have just one glass of soju?"

Manager Kang placed one glass of soju in front of the old man while offering just one glass of soju. The old man spoke while eating the food.

"This restaurant—Giwajip Soft Tofu is a family-owned restaurant and the current owner is the fourth-generation owner.

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang simultaneously reacted with surprise to the old man's explanation. They both purposefully a bit overreacted. The old man seemed to like it and gulped the glass of soju that Manager Kang placed in front of him earlier.

"So, why did you want to meet with me today?"

"I came here to ask you again to either buy my property interest or sell your property interest to me."

"If I sell it, how much would you pay for it?"

"I purchased my interest in the land at 2981 million won. You can easily verify it with the court. So, I will give you 3 billion won."

"That's nonsense!"

The old man shook his head.

This time his son spoke.

"The previous co-owner was going to buy it for 4 billion won."

"4 billion is way too high. We don't have 4 billion won."

The old man raised his voice.

"I can't sell it below that price. Everything has its current market price!"

"Since you have retained the land for a long time, your tax for the capital gains won't be a lot. Once we buy your property interest at the price you suggested, the price of the entire land becomes 7 billion won."

"That land is worth the price. You can do anything with the land."

"If the price of the land becomes 7 billion and I have to spend an additional substantial amount of money to build a building there, then there is no payability for me. I will just have to assume that you have no intention to sell the land."

Gun-Ho gave his business card to the son. And the son handed his to Gun-Ho. The son's business card said he was the president of a production agency and a theater company.

"You are an artist. I am envious of you. Businessmen like us admire artists."

As Manager Kang said, the son cleared his throat by having a dry cough and the old man kept eating his tofu with a disapproval look on his face.

"Then, we will have to let you go here. If you happen to change your mind, you know where to contact me. Oh, there is one more thing. I already talked to the parking lot owner so he could send the half of the rent to us. As to the tented cart on the land, we will have to evict them because that doesn't look good on our land."

"You shouldn't evict them. They have been running that cart while serving food for a long time now."

"If you say so, I will let them stay. I've heard one of them is your nephew. Is it true?"

"No, he is just my distant relative."

The old man stood up to leave after he said it bluntly.

Once Gun-Ho returned to his office, he opened his email inbox.

"Wow, I have 30 applications waiting for me for the translation work."

Those applications were sent to Gun-Ho in response to his job posting to translate the business plan done by Jinxi Construction Company, which was mailed to him.

"They won't make a lot of money by translating this 7-page A4 paper, but still this many people applied for the job."

The applicants had a variety of background and work experiences. Some were college students majoring in Chinese and another applicant was a college teacher with a Ph.D. Some were Chinese Korean, and one was a Chinese Korean student who was studying in Korea.

"Okay, I will ask the applicant who received his Ph.D. in China and is currently teaching in college."

Gun-Ho sent the business plan that was to be translated to the college teacher.

The business plan for Jinxi Industrial Park looked good. They included an income statement in the financial section, which showed that the business would become profitable after three years. It also stated that an increase of capital stock without consideration would be possible.

"Increase of capital stock without consideration..."

Gun-Ho liked the idea.

"About whether the business would be profitable or not within three years, I will have to wait and see for three years; however, if they could increase capital stock without consideration, then I will make money. Maybe I should participate in the joint investor?"

Gun-Ho received a call from Professor Wang.

"Did you receive the business plan sent by the president of Jinxi Construction Company?"

"Yes, I did."

"If you are still interested in it, let's sign on the letter of intent. Oh, and the staff of the City of Kunshan and the staff of Jinxi Construction Company will visit Korea soon to see the industrial complexes in the province of Korea."

"Should I give them a tour?"

"No, we already talked with the government in the province and they will arrange a tour for them."

"When will they come?"

"Next week. The group consists of five people and will stay in Korea for two nights and three days. Once they complete their visit, why don't you come to China?"

"Okay. I will make my schedule to work it out."

105 Buying Out The Other Tenant in Common – PART 2

Gun-Ho received a phone call from the son of the co-owner of the land in Gangdong District.

"Oh, you are the son of the co-owner? How are you?"

"I tried to convince my father. I told him several times already that 4 billion won is way too high for the property interest he is holding since there is a market price that says otherwise."

"Did your father change his mind?"

"He is worried about the capital gains tax after he sells his property interest."

"Your father has been retaining the land for an extended period of time, so he won't have to worry about the tax. It won't be much at all."

"Right. I talked with a friend of mine who is working as a tax accountant. He said the same thing that the tax my father has to pay won't be much."

"I think so."

"Let's just make it 3.5 billion won! My father still insists on his price, but I think I can persuade him with 3.5 billion won."

"3.5 billion won? For that price, I will have to borrow an additional amount of money from a bank. And I will have to pay more of the loan interest."

"I can't successfully convince my father with the price any lower than that. My father's stubbornness is in his genes. He has been like that since I can remember."

"Let me think about it and will let you know."

Manager Kang who was standing next to Gun-Ho asked him.

"What did he say?"

"It's from the old man's son. He said his father won't go below 3.5 billion won."

"What are you going to do, sir?"

"I'm not sure. It's a lot of money, but I do want that land."

"Once you buy the old man's property interest, you will own the land with full ownership, and the land would be 6.5 billion won land... It is expensive, but you can hardly find a vacant lot like that in Seoul City these days."

"What do you think I should do, Manager Kang?"

"If I had money to pay for the land, I would buy it."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho wanted to have fresh air. He drove his car to Cheonggye Mountain and arrived at the entrance.

"I feel so nice whenever I stay in a place, I could be surrounded by this green nature while getting away from the busy city."

Gun-Ho parked his car and walked in Yetgol Village where a lot of tourists often visit.

"I purchased my property interest for 2981 million won by the auction. If I purchase the other interest at 3500 million won, how much exactly would I spend for the land?"

Gun-Ho started calculating with his calculator while sitting on a rock.

"The price for the land only is 6481 million won."

Gun-Ho had his 10 billion won in his stock account and 6.4 billion won in his bank account. He started with 19.8 billion won that he made from the stock investment related to Four Major Rivers Project, and spent 3.4 billion won in purchasing condos, a vehicle and in filling his office with furniture and stuff.

After that, he divided the remaining money into two different accounts: stock

and bank.

"The money in my stock account is all tied up in the stock—Kumho Chemical."

Gun-Ho felt a bit anxious.

"I used 300 million won out of 6.4 billion won in my bank account to issue additional shares of my company to raise its capital. I spent another 3 billion won to purchase the 50% of the property interest of the land in Gangdong District at the auction. So I currently have 3.1 billion in cash in my bank account. What am I going to do? I have to come up with 3.5 billion won in cash to buy out the co-tenant. Okay, will have to sell some of the Kumho Chemical stock to make 400 million won.

While he was lost in thought, someone called him.

It was the branch manager of the stockbroking company.

"Sir, how are you?"

"I'm well, thank you."

"I've been waiting for an opportunity to have a round of golf with you, but you seem to have been very busy."

"Yes, well..."

"Are you, by any chance, interested in a corporate bond?"

"A corporate bond?"

"If you get a corporate bond issued by a large corporation and keep it until its expiration date, the interest you make from it is not bad at all."

"I'm not interested in it for now. Moreover, the money market rate is about to increase, right?"

"Right, once the money market rate increases, the bond price decreases; however, 2.8% is guaranteed for three-year bonds."

"I'm sorry. I am not interested."

"I just wanted to let you know since it is a very good bond. You can check the fact on Bondmall.or.kr."

"I don't know."

"Since you can get your principal and interest back, it is safer than investing in the stock market."

"I'm not so sure."

"Well, by the way, give me a chance to go and play golf with you, sir. Hahaha."

Gun-Ho got off the phone with the branch manager.

"I'm handling so many things right now. I can't put my hand on a corporate bond."

Gun-Ho paid 3.5 billion won to the old man and now he was the sole owner of the 200 pyung large vacant lot located on the main road in Gangdong District in Seoul. He spent 6.482 billion won in total.

Manager Kang seemed to be more excited than Gun-Ho.

"Um, sir, that land... do you have any plan to develop that vacant lot?"

"Why?"

"Do you want me to ask those tenants who are running a parking lot and tented cart to pay more for their rent?"

"Let's just leave it as it is for now."

"Since you spent so much on acquiring that land, will we have any financial issues?"

"I don't think we will, but I won't have much money to spend now."

"Are you planning to borrow money with the land?"

"Let me ask you a question, Manager Kang since you had worked in a bank before. If I want to borrow money from a bank with that land, how much do you

think I can borrow?"

"It depends on the appraised value of the land. The appraised value we had last time from the court was 4.5 billion won for the 50% of property interest."

"Didn't they raise the value a bit higher than the actual value in order to raise the starting auction price?"

"Even so, it shouldn't be much different."

"Then since I have full ownership now, the appraised value should be 9 billion won."

"That's about right."

"So, if I borrow money 60% of the appraised value of the land, then it would be 5.4 billion won."

"If you have an excellent credit score, a bank will lend you up to 80% which would be 7.4 billion won."

"That would be more than I actually pay for the land. Haha."

"You will need an appraisal statement first before you could apply for a loan. It will cost you some money though to get an appraisal statement."

"Haha. I'm not going to borrow money from a bank. I was just saying it. Let's talk more about it once I return from my trip to China."

Gun-Ho called for the bookkeeper—Ji-Young Jeong.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong! Could you buy a flight ticket to Shanghai, China for next Wednesday?"

"Okay."

Gun-Ho was standing up to leave the office to practice golf when Manager Kang talked to him.

"Um, sir. One more thing I need to talk to you..."

"What is it?"

"Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim who is working as a residential manager in the Bangbae location."

"What about him? Did something happen? Did he quit?"

"No, it seems that he drinks way too often during his work hours."

"He shouldn't have drunk while he is working."

"Since he is your friend, I think you'd better talk to him rather than I do."

"I believe he is under a lot of stress after he failed the government job exam again this time."

"I understand that he would be stressed; however, I'm just telling you because he drinks way too frequently."

"Really? I will talk to him."

On the way to the office after practicing golf, Gun-Ho called Min-Hyeok.

"Min-Hyeok? It's me, Gun-Ho. How's work at the OneRoomTel?"

"Oh, Gun-Ho. I mean President Goo. It's okay."

Min-Hyeok sounded down.

"I have something I have to do in the area, Bangbae Town today. I will stop by the OneRoomTel around 7 pm after work. Let's have dinner together."

"Today? Okay. I will be here."

When Gun-Ho arrived at the OneRoomTel, Min-Hyeok was sitting on his chair while looking into a blank space.

There was Min-Hyeok's room on the fourth floor near the exit. The room was assigned to a residential manager to use as an office and the manager's room. Gun-Ho, who had lived in a tiny room in a OneRoom for a long time, could understand how Min-Hyeok would feel right now. He felt sorry for Min-Hyeok.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok. How's it going?"

Gun-Ho said in a cheerful voice while extending his hand to Min-Hyeok for a handshake.

"It has been a while, Gun-Ho."

"How are you? Are you okay?"

"It's good. I like here."

"You look down, man. How did you do on the exam?"

"I failed again."

"Oh, was the result already released? You will pass someday if you keep trying."

"Whew."

Min-Hyeok let out a deep sigh.

"Let's go and have dinner."

Min-Hyeok hung a sign at the door which said the residential manager was not available and it had a contact number as well.

"No one would be here if I go out for dinner."

"It's okay. If anyone needs you, they will call you. Let's go."

106 Letter of Intent 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok went to a restaurant that specialized in spicy stir-fried octopus dishes.

"We could just have a simple meal."

"No, I want to buy you something delicious. Let's have what this restaurant specializes in—a spicy stir-fried octopus dish."

"It should be expensive."

Gun-Ho placed an order for a stir-fried octopus dish without responding to Min-Hyeok's concern.

When the dish came out, Gun-Ho suggested having liquor along with the octopus dish.

"But it's still my work hours."

"It's okay. Let's just have one glass of liquor."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok ate the food without saying a word for a while. While Gun-Ho was thinking of what he would tell him, Min-Hyeok started talking.

"Aren't you comfortable in having a friend working at your OneRoomTel as a residential manager?"

"Why are you saying that nonsense?!"

Gun-Ho placed side dishes close to Min-Hyeok.

"When is your next exam?"

"I think I will have to give it up."

"Why?"

"I am not smart enough to pass the exam and I have complicated family issues. I think I will have to find a job."

"Do you have somewhere you can work at?"

"As a matter of fact, I applied for several jobs already, but it didn't work out. I guess I am too old to start a new career. I am already in my mid-30s."

As Min-Hyeok's eyes welled with tears, he poured liquor in his own glass.

"You have work experience, right? You said you used to work at a quality assurance department. How many years did you work there?"

"Not for a long time. It was about 1 and a half years."

"Aren't you considered as an experienced worker with that work experience? In addition, you graduated from a 4-year college in Seoul."

"I have relatively short work experience with not many certificates of skills in addition to my old age; I guess I am not a preferred job candidate for employers. Moreover, I graduated from a college of liberal arts which is not very popular among employers. I sent my resume to many companies already and they didn't even invite me for an interview."

Min-Hyeok drank his beer. He initially hesitated to drink because he had to work, but now he just kept drinking.

"Are you okay? You said you have to work."

"This will be my last beer. I'm sorry I didn't want you to see me like this."

"Cheer up, man. We are still young."

"Manager Kang who is working at your company said he graduated from a good college and he used to work in a bank as a deputy general manager. However, he said he couldn't find a job for a few years after he quit the bank. He is way more qualified than me and even that person couldn't find a job. What would be the odds for a person like me to find a job then?"

"He was in his 40s."

"I guess I could get a job in a production field at a factory. But what would that job do good to me? I will make 1.8 million won per month without hope for a better future. I would suffer from hard physical labor work every day and no one would respect me. In addition, the managers in that field had issues. They are arrogant and most of them are on a serious power trip."

"I am aware of it. I had worked in a factory before, so I know that by experience. They do that because they are not educated."

"Moreover, if you work in a production field rather than in a management, there is no promotion. So you just work there every day knowing you wouldn't have a better position in the future."

Min-Hyeok grabbed his empty glass; it seemed that he wanted to drink more beer.

"Just try until next year. I'm sure you will pass next year."

"I'm giving up."

"Why?"

"It's hard to get a government job, but not just that. I think I don't have the aptitude for that either."

"What do you think you have the aptitude for?"

"Well, I don't know."

"I guess you need more beer. Let's have one more bottle."

Min-Hyeok smiled when Gun-Ho said he would order one more bottle of beer.

"Did you come here to talk to me today because you were told something about me?"

"Like what?"

"Did Manager Kang tell you that I drank too often?"

"Why do you say that? Did you get caught by him while you were drinking?"

"Several times actually. When I get caught, I felt so sorry to you rather than to Manager Kang."

"You can drink less from now on. It's okay."

Min-Hyeok lowered his head without saying anything.

"What's wrong?"

"No, nothing. Just something got in my eyes."

"Here, here is a tissue. You can use it."

Gun-Ho thought he could understand how Min-Hyeok was feeling right now.

When Gun-Ho studied for the same exam several years back, he didn't have money either. He once wanted to commit suicide because of the feeling of desperation and depression. He confronted his parents out of anger and despair to say why they had to have him in the first place without being able to give him an affluent and good life.

Gun-Ho spent three years of his youth in working at a factory knowing he had no hope to have a better life by working there. He couldn't even think about saving money because he was barely making a living. Everyone including his aunt kept asking him why he didn't marry anyone, but at that time, marriage was not an option for him. He was scared of getting stuck in that life for the rest of his life and he believed that once he got married, he would be stuck there. He could totally understand the word of Gamophobia and why some people had a fear of marriage. He believed having a child after marriage would make the situation even worse and his life would be ruined forever.

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok started drinking the additional bottle of beer they had ordered.

Gun-Ho began to talk a while after he thought of something while closing his eyes with his arms crossed.

"Min-Hyeok, would you be interested in going to China?"

"China?"

"I am planning to have a joint venture with China. I am not 100% sure whether I would actually do it or not at this point; however, once I decide to do it, I will need someone who would stay in China for the joint venture business."

Min-Hyeok grinned.

"Listen to yourself, Gun-Ho. You are asking someone who doesn't speak Chinese and who hasn't done any management work in his life."

"You can learn Chinese as you work and you could use a Korean-Chinese interpreter; not knowing the Chinese language will not affect your work in China. It is rather all about whether you have the will to do the work. When I went to China for the first time to run my restaurant there, I couldn't speak even a word in Chinese."

"Yeah, that's right. I heard you went to China and made good money. Did you really not speak Chinese at all at that time? Hadn't you have even gone to a private institution to learn the Chinese language before you went to China?"

"No, I didn't. I just went there without that sort of preparation."

"Wow. You indeed banged your head against a brick wall, and you made it."

"I'm going to China next week to sign the letter of intent, and I want you to come with me. Why don't you come and see the place before you decide if you could live there for a while."

"What about my work here?"

"Quit it!"

Min-Hyeok looked at Gun-Ho in surprise. He seemed to sober up already.

"Why? You don't like to work at my company?"

"No, I don't mean that..."

"Then what?"

"To be honest with you, I am not sure if it is a good idea for me to work at your

company. It could be uncomfortable for both of us. I have to work under you, and you could sometimes feel that you would have to take care of me."

"You wouldn't work under me. Why do you say that? We will work together as a partner, okay?"

"Whew."

Min-Hyeok let out a deep sigh. Gun-Ho suddenly grabbed Min-Hyeok's hands, that made him recoil.

"You have to help me. I need you. I need someone I can trust and share the same value to work together!"

"I am not sure if I can be of any help to you."

While saying it, Min-Hyeok seemed to think about something.

Gun-Ho firmly said,

"I will find someone else to take your residential manager position. I will ask Manager Kang to place a job posting right away."

Min-Hyeok lowered his head and didn't say a word for a while

"I understood what you meant."

"Thank you."

"Can I recommend someone to take the residential manager position then?"

"Do you know someone good for the position?"

"Yes. I know this guy from my study group. He went to the same high school as us and he is three years younger than us. He is studying for the government job exam as well and he is a hard worker. I'm sure he would be happy and grateful if he could work as a residential manager at your OneRoomTel."

"Okay, then. I will talk to Manager Kang about it. By the way, do you have your passport?"

"I actually do. I obtained my passport a few years ago when I went abroad for volunteer work. I believe it is still valid."

"That's good. You will need to apply for the visa then. Once you applied for the visa, send the receipt for the visa processing fee to Ms. Ji-Young Jeong at my office, then she will take care of it."

At that moment, Gun-Ho saw a gleam of hope in Min-Hyeok's eyes.

Gun-Ho talked with Manager Kang about Min-Hyeok.

"I met with Min-Hyeok yesterday."

Manager Kang asked while smiling,

"Did you tell him to stop drinking?"

"I guess he was under a lot of pressure and stress because of his constant failure on the exam."

"I totally understand. When I was still looking for a job after retiring from banking work, I was just like him."

"So, I am thinking about sending him to China."

"China? So you decided to participate in the joint venture?"

"I haven't signed the letter of intent yet. I want to bring him with me on the trip to China this time."

"What about the OneRoomTel in Bangbae Town. We will need a new residential manager then."

"He recommended someone he knows."

"That's nice."

"Since you are in charge of hiring a residential manager, I let you know that in advance."

"You are the president. If you decide something, I follow. I will ask Mr. Min-

Hyeok Kim to bring that person as soon as possible."

Manager Kang made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim? It's me! I talked with the president. Could you send the person who would take the residential manager position as soon as you can? And you need to hand over the work to him as well."

"Okay, I will do that."

"Also, please tell that person to prepare his resident registration and resume."

"Okay, Manager Kang."

Manager Kang made a report to Gun-Ho while smiling after getting off the phone with Min-Hyeok.

"Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim sounded cheerful this time, sir."

"Is it right?"

Gun-Ho smiled.

107 Letter of Intent 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok boarded the plane to Shanghai, China after meeting at the Incheon International Airport.

"Keep this with you."

"What is this?"

"It's your business card. You will meet with a lot of people once you arrive in China. You will need it when you do. So I made 100 of them."

"Team leader of foreign market development in GH Development Company? Gun-Ho, I can't even speak any foreign language. I don't speak English or Chinese. That's a too big title for me."

"Do you think I know things so I become the president?"

"Well, I do like my business card though. It looks so nice. I like the logo especially."

"That logo was designed by our staff, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong."

"Really? She is good at it."

When they arrived at Pudong Airport in Shanghai, he received a call from Professor Wang.

"Gun-Ho? Where are you?"

"I just got off the plane."

"Really? Then you will arrive here around 2 pm. I can wait for you in the lobby in Shangri-La Hotel."

"Don't stay in the lobby, but have a coffee in the café there while waiting for me."

"Okay. Hurry up."

Gun-Ho took Min-Hyeok to the Waitan.

"Wow, it's awesome! This is the famous Waitan. It was the extraterritorial area of the international settlement."

"You know a lot about history. I know you loved reading historical novels and cartoons even when we were in high school."

"It looks amazing."

"If we decide to do the joint venture, you will have many chances to visit historical sites and tourist spots because the joint venture would be located in Kunshan City which is close to Shanghai."

"Do you think that a joint venture will be profitable?"

"As long as companies are moving to the industrial park, there shouldn't be any problem. The real problem is the registration of the land."

"Don't they do that?"

"Chinese people don't usually clearly register the land for us. It shouldn't be a problem for a house or condo that is owned by an individual for a residential purpose; however, for a large lot like for a factory, they don't usually clearly register."

"Why do they do that?"

"That's the problem of having a business here. Korean companies have problems as well."

"What about them?"

"Many Korean companies make money by investing money in the real estate where their company is built on, rather than by their business activity. So they expect the same return when they come to China to have their business."

"Does that mean it's difficult to borrow money from a bank with the land where

a factory would be built on?"

"That's right. It's possible in some areas, but it's really hard to borrow money with the land that would be used for an industrial park."

"I see."

Min-Hyeok looked worried.

"Don't worry about it. Companies will move into the industrial park as long as we provide good price and benefit."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok took an express bus from Shanghai to Hangzhou City. Min-Hyeok was writing down something diligently in the bus.

"What are you writing?"

"I'm just taking a note about the signs of destination and the street view and stuff."

"It's a good habit to write things down. Well, I will take a nap now."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok arrived at Shangri-La Hotel in Hangzhou City and met with Professor Wang who was sitting at the café.

"Hey, Professor Wang."

"Hey, Gun-Ho. How are you?"

They greeted each other with a handshake and a hug.

"This is Min-Hyeok Kim. He is a friend of mine."

Min-Hyeok gave Professor Wang his business card that Gun-Ho gave to him earlier.

"Oh, Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim. Nice to meet you. My friend's friend is my friend. Don't you think, Mr. Kim?"

"That's right. We are all friends. Let's have a cup of coffee."

A young lady in qipao brought a menu book to Gun-Ho's party, and they ordered a cup of coffee.

"Did you have a chance to review the business plan?"

"I did. You said you wanted to participate in the joint venture by acquiring some shares to support Deputy Mayor Seukang Li. Did you decide to give up?"

"Yeah, I gave up. I think we'd better not participate. That way the joint venture would look better. So, as you saw in the business plan already, China and the Korean company will equally take 50:50. Seukang Li agreed to it as well."

"If I make enough money from this, I will support Seukang Li for you, Professor Wang."

"Thank you for saying it, friend."

Min-Hyeok listened to the conversation between Gun-Ho and Professor Wang, with an envious look on his face. He couldn't understand their conversation at all because they were talking in Chinese, so he was just sitting there while fiddling with his cup.

Gun-Ho and Professor Wang started discussing about the joint venture with the business plan on the table.

"Since China invest in kind, all the expenses incurred for the presentation and wages for the staff of Jinxi Construction Company will be paid with the funds invested by a Korean company."

"In the beginning, yes, probably so."

"What would happen after we would spend all the money that a Korean company would invest?"

"1,500,000 dollars is a significant amount of money in China. It can't be all spent within several months. As you see in the business plan, the number of workers sent to the joint venture from Jinxi Construction Company is about 30. There are a few high paid engineers but most of them are regular workers. The total wage shouldn't be more than 100,000 dollars per month."

"We will do at least one presentation in Korea to attract Korean companies into the industrial park. We will have to then place advertisements in a daily newspaper and the presentation will be held in a hotel. That will cost a lot."

"We did some research about it. It won't cost much to place an advertisement in a Chinese newspaper. The problem is the cost for Korean newspaper advertisements and the presentation room to rent in a Korean hotel. We are guessing that we would need about 30,000 dollars for them; what do you think? The workers of Jinxi Construction Company said so as well."

"I'm not sure."

Gun-Ho looked at Min-Hyeok and asked.

"Do you think it would cost about 10 million won to place an advertisement in a daily newspaper in Korea—the size of about 17 centimeters by 37 centimeters?"

"I'm not so sure, but an ad in an economic newspaper should be less pricey."

"Since we are leasing the lot to companies, we can't register the lot under those companies' names, right? Korean companies prefer to move in a lot where they could register the land because they want to borrow money from a bank with the land they are using for their business. Is there anything you can do about it?"

"That's hard to be done. The entire land of the industrial park is registered under Jinxi Construction Company and the land is divided into pieces to lease to companies. Some Chinese people misled Korean companies that they could borrow money with the land. Seking Li doesn't do that kind of things. That's why the required security deposit is not high."

"The security deposit is 100 Yuan with a monthly rent of 1.0 Yuan per . How much would it be then for a factory with 3,000 pyung?"

"I will calculate for you."

"Oh, Min-Hyeok. Thank you."

Min-Hyeok calculated with his electronic calculator.

"For the 3,000 pyung, it would be approximately 175 million won for a security

deposit with a monthly rent of 1,750,000 won."

"Hmmm."

Gun-Ho thought for a while with his arms crossed.

Professor Wang pulled out something from a large envelope he brought in.

"What is this?"

"It's a drawing and specification of a standard factory. There are three types: A, B, and C.

"So a factory can be one of these types. Building a factory will cost a lot as well."

"A factory will be built within a budget of a security deposit. This is a prefabricated factory building."

"I see. Let's have dinner now. Why don't we go to Louwailou where we can have traditional Chinese food."

Min-Hyeok was amazed by the dishes.

"Wow, I see all sorts of dainties."

"Hey, Mr. Kim. Drink this."

Professor Wang poured liquor in Min-Hyeok's glass. He then asked Gun-Ho,

"If the joint venture starts, who are you going to send as a president?"

"According to the business plan, China will assign someone for the chairman of the board while Korea will send someone for the president position, for the first term. For the second term, they will do the other way around."

"That's very common. Since you, President Goo, have your business to run in Korea so I assume you wouldn't come to China to manage the joint venture."

"Min-Hyeok here, he will do it."

"Oh, really? That's what I thought."

Professor Wang extended his hand to Min-Hyeok for a handshake.

"I was told that the president of Jinxi Construction Company will take the chairman of the board position, and for the vice president, the planning director who wrote the business plan would take the position."

"Really? I guess the vice president will be very busy."

108 Letter of Intent 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho, Min-Hyeok and Professor Wang headed to Kunshan City.

The Deputy Mayor of the City of Kunshan—Seukang Li—called for the president of Jinxi Construction Company, Chinkkweo Seon. Jinxi Construction Company was a government-owned company and its president—Chinkkeo Seon—used to work for Kunshan City as a construction deputy director.

"Long time no see."

Gun-Ho and Chinkkeo Seon greeted each other with a handshake. Seukang Li told Gun-Ho.

"Most of the work is done in the industrial park now. The road accessing the park is paved, the management office is completed, and the 3-Flow work is of course done."

"What do you mean by the management office is completed? Does that mean the phone and the internet are working?"

The president of Jinxi Construction Company responded instead.

"The phone is not working yet. It will take a few more days. Other than that, the office is all set up with furniture and necessary supplies."

"Oh, really?"

"However, China's investment in the industrial park is the land only. So, Jinxi Construction Company will send a bill to the joint venture for the cost incurred in constructing the management office and filling the office with furniture and things."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho thought that Chinese people were very accurate in dividing the cost.

When Gun-Ho visited Jinxi Industrial Park later, he was astonished. It looked

totally different from the time when he had visited it before. The road was neatly paved and small trees were planted on the borders between factories. Tall trees were planted along the street as well.

"Do you see a building over there? That's the management office."

"Oh, wow. It looks great. Is it a prefabricated building?"

"Yes, it is. The management office and a restaurant are located on the first floor, and on the second floor, you can find an administrative office, a president's office, and a vice president's office. Restrooms are situated at the backside of the building."

When they arrived at the main entrance of the management building, a neatly dressed man who looked like in his 50s and a lady in her early 30s greeted Gun-Ho's party.

"This is Kkangsin Kkao. He will be working as a vice president in the joint venture. This lady will handle general affairs. Her name is Dingpun."

Kkangsin Kkao and Dingpun gave their business cards to Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok. Since the joint venture was not yet formed, their business cards still indicated their current position with Jinxi Construction Company which were a planning director and staff in the planning department.

Seukang Li gave Gun-Ho a tap on the shoulder before saying,

"What do you think? Did Professor Wang explain to you about the joint venture? You won't regret it. Don't worry about it. It looks like you brought someone who would take the president position for our joint venture. I guess we are ready to sign the letter of intent."

"Will the letter of intent be signed by Jinxi Construction Company of Kunshan City and GH Development Company?"

"Right. I had a hard time persuading my superiors in Kunshan City to select GH Development Company as our co-venturer because the company is small. However, since GH Development has no debt, and it will invest in cash, I pushed them hard to do it."

"You said the joint venture will possibly increase capital stock without consideration, right?"

"Oh, I guess if a company is doing well, it increases its capital stock, and it expands its business and so on, right? Our role in Kunshan City is up to the completion of 3-Flow work. We will leave the rest of the business matters to the joint venture. What you would do from now on is up to the joint venture."

Professor Wang chipped in.

"Seukang, you will have to join them when they give a presentation in Korea. They will need someone who is a high-ranking official in the Chinese government to effectively attract Korean companies, don't you think?"

"Of course, I will come to Korea for the presentation. If I can't make it, I will send the construction director of the city."

"Did you hear that, Gun-Ho? Seunkang Li will be there."

"Also, you said companies won't have to pay corporate tax for three years, right?"

"We are going in that direction. I shouldn't tell you everything today though. Haha."

The planning director of Jinxi Construction Company gave a tour to Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok around the management building. They looked around the offices, the restaurant, and the restrooms on the first floor.

"Hmm. It looks really nice. It's neat and clean since it's a newly constructed building."

Min-Hyeok seemed to be impressed as well.

"It is indeed very well built."

Gun-Ho's group then moved to the second floor to continue their tour.

"There are desks and chairs already placed in these offices."

"The computers are all in working condition as well."

"Hmm."

"This is the office for the president."

There were a large L-shaped desk and an executive swivel office chair. Behind the desk, there was a wooden bookshelf. A large sofa set for a guest was there as well.

"Hmm. It is nice. The room is carpeted. Min-Hyeok, if we decide to participate in the joint venture, this will be your room."

Min-Hyeok blushed when Gun-Ho told him that this would be his office. He then asked Gun-Ho.

"What about the chairman of the board? Is he not working here?"

"He will not. He will come whenever necessary though. Instead, the vice president will assist you."

Min-Hyeok wrote down something.

"Min-Hyeok, if you work here as a president, you will have to manage all the staff working in this building. There will be more than 30 workers."

Min-Hyeok blushed again, and then his face became filled with worries. Maybe the idea of working as a president was too much to digest in a few days for him.

Seukang Li talked to Gun-Ho.

"Gun-Ho, let's sign the letter of intent tomorrow morning around 11 am. What do you say? If you say yes, I will ask journalists to come and join us."

Gun-Ho, let out a deep sigh before answering it.

"Okay, let's do it. Since you, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li and Professor Wang guaranteed that I would make money from this, I will do it."

Seukang Li and Jien Wang held Gun-Ho's hand while smiling.

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok arrived at Crown Plaza Hotel in Kunshan City to sign the letter of intent.

There was a small flag of China and a flag of Korea placed on the table which was covered with a white tablecloth, and a banner was hanging on the wall.

"Gun-Ho, journalists are here. I've never been to an event like this. I've only seen this kind of thing on TV."

"Haha. You don't have to be nervous, Min-Hyeok. I will be the one who will sign the letter of intent with the president of Jinxi Construction Company."

"What about the deputy mayor of Kunshan City?"

"He can't do it because he is a government official. However, he will later join us for a photograph, and you should come as well."

The planning director from Jinxi Construction Company was talking on the microphone. The staff in the planning department showed Gun-Ho a table to sit while smiling.

Gun-Ho and Chinkkweo Seon—the president of Jinxi Construction Company—sat on a table while facing each other. Behind them, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li, the construction director of Kunshan City, the planning director of Jinxi Construction Company, and Min-Hyeok were standing.

Gun-Ho and Chinkkweo Seon signed the letter of intent and shook hands. The journalists were taking pictures of the moment. Some people were video recording it.

There were about seven to eight journalists, and one of them asked a question to Gun-Ho.

"Do you think Jinxi Industrial Park will succeed?"

Surprisingly, the journalist who asked the question to Gun-Ho was Korean.

"Are you from Korea?"

When Gun-Ho asked the journalist in surprise, he said he was from the Korean

Economic Newspaper, and he was currently working at the Shanghai location.

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho offered his hand to the journalist for a handshake.

"I believe Jinxi Industrial Park has a bright future. It is located in Kunshan City that is close to the two big cities which are Shanghai and Suzhou, which will give great benefit to the companies in doing business there. Moreover, the companies in Jinxi Industrial Park will enjoy the corporate tax-free for three years in addition to the low rental price. This is certainly a rare opportunity for companies, and I am sure that many Korean companies will be interested. Especially if they were planning to expand their business to China."

There was a person who was diligently interpreting what Gun-Ho said for Chinese journalists. The interpreter gave his business card to Gun-Ho when he realized that Gun-Ho looked at him several times.

"Haha. I'm an interpreter from the city's foreign affairs office. I studied in Korea."

"Oh, I see. You speak Korean very well."

The Korean journalist asked another question.

"According to the brochure provided for the journalists, you are the president of GH Development, Gun-Ho Goo. Is that right?"

"That's correct."

"Can I ask you how old you are?"

"I'm 35 years old."

"Is it Korean age?"

"Yes."

"We won't take any more questions. Please have a seat and enjoy the food."

The president of Jinxi Construction Company had the journalists go sit on their

tables.

That evening, Jinxi Construction Company hosted a dinner at a restaurant called Hwadongchancheong. It was the same restaurant that Gun-Ho was once invited at last time he visited China. The restaurant was still marvelous.

That night, Seukang Li, Professor Wang, Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok drank a lot until they were overly drunk. They were the four people who would take the lead of northeast Asia economy in the future.

109 Letter of Intent 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok headed to Pudong Airport in Shanghai to go back to Korea.

"I have two to three months left before signing the actual contract. I will have to prepare 1.5 billion won, and I don't think I have enough cash in my bank account."

Gun-Ho had spent 6.5 billion won earlier to acquire the vacant lot in Gangdong District. At that time he had to sell some of the Kumho Chemical stock for 300 million won to prepare enough funds. The price of the Kumho Chemical stock had increased, but it was still a bit early to sell it.

"Should I sell the stock again? I shouldn't sell it little by little like this."

While Gun-Ho was thinking about the funds he had to prepare, Min-Hyeok seemed to have his own things to think about.

"There are two to three months left before the contract signing. What should I do during those months? I can't go back to being a residential manager again."

Gun-Ho talked to Min-Hyeok while smiling.

"You will be very busy before the contract signing. You have to learn the Chinese language at a private institution. Also, learn some computer skills as well. You know how to do PowerPoint, right?"

"I know. I used to work with PowerPoint and Excel when I worked at a quality assurance department."

"That's good. When we give a presentation in a hotel while promoting the industrial park, we will have to use PowerPoint."

"I was thinking about it too. I think you give me the contents of the presentation since you know better than me, then I will make the presentation material using PowerPoint."

"Okay, I was going to do it."

"Let's buy some liquor and cosmetics at the duty-free shop over there."

Gun-Ho purchased two bottles of liquor and cosmetics then handed them to Min-Hyeok.

"Why are you giving these to me?"

"Your father is at home, right? He doesn't drive a bus anymore. Bring those liquor to your father and give your mother the cosmetics."

"Wow. Thank you, Gun-Ho."

"Also, until you actually go to China, I will give you a basic monthly salary. Ms. Ji-Young Jeong at our office will send you a monthly salary of 1.5 million won to your bank account."

"Whoa! You are giving me a monthly salary already?"

"For the cost to learn the Chinese language, bring the receipts to our office. Our company will pay for your education as a training fee."

"Thank you Gun-Ho. I hope I don't impose."

"Don't say that. You will work hard for our GH Development Company to make a lot of money."

"Haha. I hope we make a lot of money."

"We will."

Gun-Ho gave Min-Hyeok a tap on the shoulder while saying it.

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok were working to make this 1.5 million dollars small joint venture work out without knowing how valuable this experience would be for them.

When Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok came back to Korea, everyone seemed to know about the joint venture already.

Manager Kang and Ji-Young brought the economic newspaper to Gun-Ho and made a fuss about it.

"Sir! Look at this!"

There was a big picture of Gun-Ho and the president of Jinxi Construction Company signing the letter of intent, on the economic newspaper. It said,

"A Korean company, GH Development will participate in developing Jinxi Industrial Park in Jiangsu Province, China. The industrial park will be located between Shanghai City and Suzhou Town in Jiangsu Province, which is known to be an excellent location for business. The president of GH Development, Gun-Ho Goo (34) stated that in addition to the great location of the industrial park, they will offer an exceptionally low rental price and excellent benefits such as corporate tax-free, and he expected many Korean companies to be interested in moving to the industrial park."

Gun-Ho received a call from Jong-Suk.

"Bro, I saw you in a newspaper. I'm so envious of you. If you start the joint venture, give me a position there."

"F*ck off, man. Those stupid journalists are writing fiction."

Gun-Ho received a call from his sister as well.

"Gun-Ho, are you in a newspaper? I heard it from Seung-Hee who was doing the insurance sales. You are doing great."

"No, no, it's nothing."

"I told our mom and dad. Dad bought the newspaper from a convenience store and made a newspaper clipping."

"He didn't have to do that."

"I will let you go, brother since you are probably very busy."

Gun-Ho received a call from the Attorney, Young-Jin Kim who was working at Kim&Jeong.

"President Goo? I saw the newspaper. Good job. I'm sure you made the right decision. The business will surely go well since you are doing it with Professor Wang and Deputy Mayor Li. Congratulations."

"It's just the beginning. I'm worried. I'm not so sure if I made the right decision."

"I talked with Jien Wang on the phone. He said it is a Cash Cow business so you won't lose money in the worst case scenario. Also, he said that if Seukang Li gets promoted in the government, you will have better days with him in the future."

"I hope so."

"You will."

Gun-Ho received another call. This time it was from a lady.

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, I am. Who's calling please?"

"You don't remember me? It's at Hannam Town."

"Hannam Town?"

"I am so disappointed. You already forgot about me. It's Mi-Hyang Jang from the Pine in Hannam Town."

"Oh, I see. How did you get my number?"

"I saw the newspaper that you are doing a joint venture with China. Congratulations. Why don't you stop by our restaurant; I'd like to give you a congratulatory drink."

"Than... Thank you."

It was from the hostess of the secret bar in Hannam Town.

Ji-Young received a call to the company phone and looked at Gun-Ho.

"What? It's for me?"

"Yes, this person wants to talk to you."

"Me? Maybe because of the newspaper?"

"He said he is calling from Yangji Construction Company."

"I've never heard of that company before."

Gun-Ho took the phone while thinking it was weird.

"Hello, President Gun-Ho Goo. This is Gwang-Ho Yoo, the president of Yangji Construction."

"How can I help you?"

"I am calling to talk about the land you own in Gangdong District."

"The land? What about it?"

"I'd like to talk to you in person. Are you available right now?"

"Yes, I am in the office."

A man in his late 50s came to Gun-Ho's office. He was with another man who looked like in his 40s and was neat looking.

"I'm Gwangho Yoo, the president of Yangji Construction."

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Three men greeted each other and sat on a table. Jin-Young brought green tea.

"You acquired the vacant lot in Gangdong District. As a matter of fact, we were very interested in that land and we missed it."

Gun-Ho was wondering why these people came to him while giving them a wary look.

"First, congratulations on acquiring a very good real estate property. As you already know, that land is situated in an excellent location for an office-tel. If you plan to build a building there, I'd like to work with you. We have brought

our portfolio that shows our work so far."

The president of Yangji Construction handed Gun-Ho a pamphlet.

Gun-Ho slowly talked to them after looking at the pamphlet.

"I have no plans to build anything yet. I don't have money for it."

"No one builds a building these days with their own cash."

"Then how do they build a building without money?"

"I've looked at the real estate registration of the land, and there was no lien or anything attached to the land. So, you can borrow money from a bank with the land. Once you build an office-tel, you won't have to worry about lease or sell because of the location."

"Building a property there will take around one or two years. Then how do I pay the loan interest during that period?"

"Say, you borrow 5 billion won. The interest will be about 300 million won, then you can build a building with the remaining 4.7 billion won."

"If I wanted to build a 15-floor building, the cost will be twice more than that. I don't think I can handle the cost and the loan interest."

"Sir, you don't have to wait until the building is completed to sell it. You can sell it before the completion. You can pay off the loan before the building is even completed."

"Well, I will have to think about it. I've spent too much money already on acquiring the land."

"You will have to pay a lot of property tax on a land like that. It's 200 pyung large and located on the main road of Seoul City. It's better to build an office-tel and sell them off."

"I don't know."

"Once you build the building, you can just give the sales work to an agency. You

don't have to do anything. You can just sit there and collect money."

"I'm not sure."

"Well, just give us a call any time. We will be waiting for your call."

110 Selling the Land 1 – PART 1

When the president of Yangji Construction left the office, Manager Kang came to Gun-Ho.

"Sir, you have to be careful about their usual scheme. Many landowners lost their land by listening to a construction company that told them that they could build a building on their land without spending their own money."

"I think I heard about it before."

"A construction company doesn't care whether a landowner builds a building with his own money or borrowed money. Once a building is completed and it doesn't sell, it is the landowner who has to bear all the consequences. Many landowners ended up selling the land because they couldn't pay the loan."

"He said I would have to pay a high property tax."

"You can use the rent you receive from the parking lot tenant and the tented cart tenant."

"Well, anyway, we will have to think about this eventually."

Gun-Ho opened his stock account for the first time in a long time.

He had purchased the Kumho Chemical stock for 10 billion won and sold 300 million won stock when he acquired the land in Gangdong District. So, he was supposed to have about 9.7 billion won worth of stocks in his account. However, the stock price had increased.

"Haha. The price of Kumho Chemical increased by 3.5%. So my net account value is now back to 10 billion won."

If Gun-Ho sold all of his stock right now, he would have 10 billion won in cash.

Gun-Ho stretched himself before wearing his jacket that was hanging on the wall.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, is Manager Kang out to visit the OneRoomTels?"

"Yes, he is."

"How much did we receive from the OneRoomTels yesterday?"

"We received 1.8 million won from four OneRoomTels."

"Hmm."

"Did you file the Four Major Public Insurance for the new residential manager?"

"No, I didn't because he didn't want it."

"Then how do we classify him?"

"I listed him as a day laborer."

"I see. I will be back later."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho went to the indoor golf practice facility. The coach came while Gun-Ho was practicing his swing by himself.

"You look prettier than the last time I saw you."

"Don't be silly. I heard you went to China."

"How did you know?"

"You didn't bring anything for me?"

"Oh, I forgot."

"I'm just kidding. Keep practicing your swing. Don't lower your head."

Gun-Ho spent about an hour in golf practicing before he sat at the café in the Education Community Center building to drink a fruit juice.

"I still have a lot of time before having to go back to the office. I want to get

some fresh air. Maybe I should visit a golf field in Yongin City or Anseong City. I've never been in a golf field before. I've always practiced golf in an indoor facility."

Gun-Ho visited two golf fields in Yongin City, and he liked them.

"Nice. The green field looks so beautiful."

Gun-Ho then headed to Anseong City.

"I want to see a golf field in Anseong City as well. The membership fee should be less pricey than the one in Yongin City. Gee, I gotta go to a bathroom. I'd better stop by the rest area. Oh, I see the Anseong rest area over there."

After finishing his business in a restroom, he bought some snacks like walnut cookies and banana-flavored milk. When he was having his snack in the rest area, he heard someone calling his name.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo?"

Gun-Ho lifted his head to look at the person.

"Oh, General affairs manager at YS Tech—Seon-Hong Hwang?"

"Mr. Goo, you look great. You seem to be doing very well. What do you do these days?"

"I'm running a small real estate development company. How's the president of YS Tech—Young-Sik Park?"

"They are all doing fine."

The General affair manager looked a bit older than before. He lost some more hair and some new wrinkles appeared under his eyes.

"How's the company?"

"It's not doing well these days."

"They are not selling well?"

"Don't get me started. Since our major client, Mulpasaneop is not doing well, our work reduced a lot accordingly."

"What happened to Mulpasaneop?"

"The president of Mulpasaneop's son started a business in China, and it didn't seem to work out. Our company used to sell products worth 500 million won to Mulpasaneop every month. Now, it was reduced to 300 million won."

"Oh, I see. The company probably had to let go of many employees then."

"Right. We used to have over 100 employees. Now we have only 70 employees. My job is not secured either. By the way, you look really great. You seemed to make a lot of money these days."

"Haha. What are you talking about? Thank you anyway for saying it."

Gun-Ho wanted to meet the president of YS Tech—Young-Sik Park.

"I wouldn't be able to come this far without him. I've forgotten about the person I should feel grateful for a long time."

However, Gun-Ho didn't have enough sources to help his current financial situation. He couldn't just go see him carrying a pack of beef ribs as a present or give him some money to help him out. Any of those wouldn't help his current situation.

"Let's see how things go. I can go see him when he really really needs my help."

The reason why YS Tech was having a financial difficulty was because of Mulpasaneop. Its major client, Mulpasaneop's financial problems affected YS Tech's business. The only way for YS Tech to survive, in Gun-Ho's view, was to diversify its clients. However, it was not easy for a vendor to attract more clients just by providing good quality products.

"It's all about connection. There is not much difference in the quality of products among vendors. The key is the network."

The next day, when Gun-Ho came to his office in the morning, he assigned new work to Ji-Young.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, do you know that you can see a company's information on the Financial Supervisory Service website? Through their Data Analysis, Retrieval and Transfer System (DART)?"

"Yes, I do."

"Here are the names of two companies you need to monitor sometimes. Pay attention to their official announcements. You don't have to look at their old announcements; I need to know their official announcements from now. They are YS Tech and Mulpasaneop."

"Okay, sir."

"If you see any changes, let me know. Also, check their credit on a paid-website for more information."

"Okay."

While Gun-Ho was reading a newspaper after signing the daily report, Ji-Young came to Gun-Ho.

"I checked the two companies you gave me earlier on DART, but I can only find Mulpasaneop. YS Tech can't be found on their website."

"Really? Then just keep an eye on the information of Mulpasaneop."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho talked to himself with his eyes closed.

"YS Tech cannot be found on DART... I guess YS Tech was removed from the company list that is required to post their announcements because its sales revenue reduced significantly."

Ji-Young printed out the financial statements of Mulpasaneop from the paid-website that provided companies information. Gun-Ho knew how to read and analyze financial statements to see a company's financial situation. He studied accounting when he worked at a factory, and he worked in accounting afterward in Asan. Moreover, as he ran his own business so far, he had been exposed more to accounting as a business owner. That added more depth to his accounting

knowledge and understanding.

"The short-term debt is increasing."

Gun-Ho paid attention to Mulpasaneop's debt which kept increasing.

"Their account payable and accrued expenses payable keep increasing. Their current financial status is very dangerous."

The company seemed to be groaning with pain.

"This company has a lot of investment assets abroad."

Gun-Ho started analyzing their profit and loss statement.

"Their sales reduced compared to last year, and their net income is negative."

Gun-Ho could imagine that YS Tech would suffer with Mulpasaneop since it was YS Tech's major client. Mulpasaneop was not a KOSDAQ registered firm; however, it was a large and stable company. When Gun-Ho worked at YS Tech, the annual gross sales of Mulpasaneop was over 70 billion won.

"At that time, the company wanted to become a KOSDAQ registered firm; I guess it didn't work out. What went wrong? Their credit score is negative C."

Gun-Ho decided to wait and see how things went with Mulpasaneop.

111 Selling the Land 1 – PART 2

The president of Yangji Construction—Gwang-Ho Yoo—came to Gun-Ho's office again.

"President Goo, have you thought about it?"

"I don't think I can build a building now because I don't have enough money to do it."

"That's a shame. What about selling the land to us?"

"Do you mean selling the vacant lot to you?"

"Yes, we will develop the land."

"How much would you pay for it?"

"How much did you pay for the other 50% of property interest?"

"If I give the price we paid, would you believe it?"

"I understand that you paid a bit more than the price you paid at the auction."

Gun-Ho liked the conversation he was having with the president of Yangji Construction; it was fun.

"The old man who had 50% of the property interest was very stubborn."

"I know him very well. He used to sell products that were made in the USA at Namdaemun Market. His son is a well-known theatre actor."

"You know about them a lot."

"I know a lot more about them. His son and daughter have a different mother."

"Really?"

"By the way, I will pay you 6.5 billion won for the land."

The offer price was about the same as the price Gun-Ho paid for the land. Gun-Ho spent 2.98 billion won at the auction and paid another 3.5 billion won to the old man. So he paid a total of 6.48 billion for the entire land.

Gun-Ho looked at the president of Yangji Construction. His face was shiny.

'This guy is crafty.'

"Haha. You are asking me to sell the land for a price that is less than what I paid. You are kidding me, right?"

"How much did you pay?"

"I paid a total of 8 billion won."

"That's nonsense! I will cut my wrist if you paid more than 7 billion won for that land."

"It seems like you will lose your wrist."

"Let's not continue this silly conversation. I know you have spent your time and energy in acquiring the land. Also, you probably had a hard time persuading that old man. I will give you 7 billion won."

"I have no intention to sell the land."

"Did you receive an appraisal on the land?"

"I didn't have to because I didn't need it since I don't need to borrow money using the land as collateral."

As Gun-Ho said it, the president of Yangji Construction smiled slightly.

The next day, the president of Yangji Construction—Gwang-Ho Yoo—came to Gun-Ho's office again.

"You are coming to my office very often."

"I know. I feel like I am working in this office."

Gwang-Ho Yoo laughed.

"Sell the land to me for 7 billion won."

"President Yoo, let's stop this. We are both getting tired. Give it up."

"You want to become like that old man? Listen to yourself. You are saying that you don't want to sell the land, and you are not developing the land either."

Gun-Ho recoiled from the idea of being like the old man. He actually sounded just like him.

"That's right. I should either develop the land or sell the land. I shouldn't just hold on it without doing anything just like what the old man did."

"President Goo, come with me!"

"Where to?"

"It's lunchtime. I will buy you lunch."

"I'm not sure if I can have a meal comfortably with you."

"Just stay at the main entrance. I will bring my car; it's parked in the underground parking lot."

Gun-Ho was waiting for President Gwang-Ho Yoo in front of the main entrance of his office-tel building. After a moment, President Yoo showed up. Surprisingly, President Yoo was sitting in a shiny Mercedes-Benz 600. His chauffeur was driving the car.

"Get in, let's go to Yeoksam Town. It's not far from here."

"Okay."

"I know a good sushi restaurant. It's a small restaurant but always crowded with customers. It shouldn't be busy this hour though."

Gun-Ho and President Yoo of Yangji Construction went to an alley in Yeoksam Town. The restaurant's name was Minado.

"Would you like to have liquor?"

"Suit yourself!"

"Chef! We'd like to have sushi for three persons with three glasses of Hiro Sake."

A grilled fin of blowfish was floating on the hot sake. The chef was preparing sushi for Gun-Ho's party, and he then looked at Gun-Ho.

"Umm... Are you Mr. Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Huh?"

Gun-Ho looked at the chef closely. It was the restaurant owner with a shaved head in Noryangjin.

"Oh my. How are you?"

Gun-Ho stood up and extended his hand to him for a handshake.

The chef yelled at someone at the counter.

"Uncle! Uncle!"

A man who was sitting at the counter turned around. The man was President Hee-Yeol Byeon who had sold his restaurant in China to Gun-Ho.

"President Gun-Ho Goo from China is here."

"Oh, President Goo!"

"Oh my gosh, how are you? You opened a restaurant here."

President Yoo of Yangji Construction was laughing.

"It seems you know each other. I guess I picked the right place. Haha."

Gun-Ho asked President Hee-Yeol Byeon,

"How's the business? You seem to be doing fine."

"Yes, it's okay. My nephew is a good cook."

"I heard your nephew studied cooking in Japan."

"That's right. What about you, President Goo? Did you sell the restaurant in China?"

"Yes. I'm back in Korea and I'm working in the real estate development field now."

Gun-Ho gave his business card to President Hee-Yeol Byeon.

"Your office is just around here. Come visit us often."

"Haha. Sure, I will do that."

President Hee-Yeol Byeon had to go to another table when a group of customers came into the restaurant.

President Gwang-Ho Yoo said while sipping his Hiro Sake.

"So, you used to run a restaurant in China. You made money by selling the restaurant rather than serving the food, didn't you?"

"I actually made money by investing in real estate there. How did you start your construction company, President Yoo?"

"I used to work in a big construction company. I was a construction field manager, and I once went abroad to oversee the construction field there as well. Then, I inherited my father's small construction business and made it big."

"I see."

After lunch, Gun-Ho and President Yoo walked out of the sushi restaurant; their faces were all red because of the liquor they drank with their lunch. Gun-Ho didn't forget to tell the chef with a shaved head and President Hee-Yeol Byeon that he would come again.

President Yoo held Gun-Ho's arm.

"Let's go to my office and have one more drink."

"Where is your office?"

"It's around Yeongdong Traditional Market."

Gun-Ho wanted to know more about this President Yoo person because he couldn't trust the man yet. So he was more than willing to see his office.

President Yoo's office was located on the 6th floor in a seven-floor building. There were more employees than Gun-Ho expected; there were probably about 30 workers there. They were all wearing a white shirt.

The staff stood up and greeted when they saw President Yoo coming into the office. President Yoo took Gun-Ho to his office. There was a desk in front of the office door, and a female staff was sitting there. She stood up and greeted when she saw President Yoo.

"Did anyone call me?"

"President Oh from Southern Tile and President Park from Dongwon Construction called."

"Really? Please bring us some tea."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho sat on a large sofa in the president's office.

"The office is bigger than I expected. Are you getting a lot of work?"

"Not in Seoul though. We have some work in the provincial areas."

"Comparing to your company, GH Construction is a tiny tiny office."

"Don't say that. You are truly a rich person."

"Nah!"

"I'm serious. You seem to be about ten years younger than me, and you already acquired a 7 billion won land. You are a true businessman in this field where a lot of con-artists are found."

Gun-Ho knew President Yoo was buttering him up, but he liked it. However, Gun-Ho had to focus on the business here with him.

"I have to tell you again. First, I can't sell the land for less than 8 billion won. If you insist on a price lower than that, I won't see you again. Second, the sales price on the sales contract should state 6.5 billion won."

"You want to make the contract with a price lower than the actual sales price."

"I want to avoid paying a high tax."

"A contract with a lower price..."

President Yoo sat on the sofa and thought about it for a while.

Silence filled the air.

President Yoo who was thinking with his eyes closed suddenly shouted loudly.

"Okay! I will take it for 8 billion won!"

Gun-Ho clapped while laughing.

"You are the true businessman, President Yoo. You should be firmly decisive when you see the certainty in either real estate or stock. The construction business is not my area of expertise. You are the expert in that field. If you could get an appraised value of 10 billion won, you can borrow 8 billion won from a bank. I know you are the type of person who could sell with the aerial view of your construction site. I can tell by looking at the photos hanging on the wall."

Gun-Ho finally sold the land that he had purchased at around 6.5 billion won for 8 billion won. Also, he could avoid paying a capital gains tax by making the sales contract with the same price he paid for rather than the actual price he sold it for.

112 Selling the Land 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received 8 billion won to his bank account. It was from Yangji Construction Company for the land.

Manager Kang let Gun-Ho know that the proceeds of the land sales were received.

"We received the full amount of the sales price of the land."

"Sir, you made 1.5 billion won from this one-time transaction. It's about the same amount of a condo in Gangnam."

"Is it?"

"You are awesome, sir."

"Even though I made 1.5 billion won, the sales contract says I sold the land for about the same price that I paid when I had purchased it. So, I won't have to pay the capital gains tax for this transaction. I will put all of 1.5 billion won to GH Development."

"To our company?"

Manager Kang seemed to be surprised.

Gun-Ho called for Ji-Young.

"Ms. Ji-Young, once you verify the 1.5 billion won is deposited in the business account, just record it as a fund that came from the company president."

"Okay, sir."

"We will use this money as our investment in the joint venture."

Manager Kang said while nodding his head.

"I see. Because we need to invest 1.5 billion won in the joint venture."

"Right. And I will send Min-Hyeok who used to work as a residential manager in our Bangbae OneRoomTel to China to oversee the joint venture business."

"I thought you would do so. Does that mean Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim no longer prepares for the government job exam?"

"Yes, he gave up. He said he didn't want it anymore and that he didn't have the aptitude for it."

"That's a shame. I'm sure he studied a lot for it."

Gun-Ho called for Ji-Young again.

"Starting from this month, send 1.5 million won to Min-Hyeok Kim's bank account as his monthly salary."

"Is he our employee then? Is he okay with 1.5 million won salary?"

"That's okay. Once he starts his work in the joint venture in China, he will receive an additional salary from the joint venture."

"So, he is getting his salary from two companies."

"That's right. However, the salary he would receive from the joint venture in China would be a lot lower. We have to pay the workers in the joint venture about the same salary that Chinese people get paid in China. So, I wanted to pay an additional salary to Min-Hyeok from our company."

"I see. I will do the necessary paperwork for a new employee right away."

"Please file the Four Major Public Insurance for him as well."

"Okay."

"Also, he will begin his class in a private institution to learn the Chinese language before leaving for China. When he brings the receipt for his course fee, please list it as our company expense."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho then talked to Manager Kang.

"How much is our sales revenue this month?"

Manager Kang opened his file while scratching his head; he might not remember the exact amount.

"It's 72,500,000 won."

"Hmm, our company is still a small firm; its annual sales are not even 1 billion won."

"That's not true, sir. There are a lot of companies with a large amount of annual sales, but also with a large amount of debt and business expenses. The tax accountant office we work with, also said our company was exceptional. You heard that too, right, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong?"

"Yes, I heard that too."

"Haha. Is it right? Anyway, our sales revenue has increased because of your hard work. Let's have lunch together. Since I made some money by selling a vacant lot in Gangdong District, let's go somewhere far from here for lunch today."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young looked at each other while smiling.

"Umm, sir."

Manager Kang seemed to have something to tell to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho looked at Manager Kang.

"We still have one more hour before lunchtime."

"Then let's work one more hour before lunch."

"I mean... Since Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim is now our employee, why don't we ask him to join us for lunch today?"

"Min-Hyeok? Maybe he is in a class already. Why don't you call him?"

"Okay."

Manager Kang made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim? It's me, Manager Kang."

"Oh, Manager Kang. I am in the middle of class. I will give you a call back right away."

"He said he is in a class right now."

After ten minutes, Min-Hyeok called.

"It's me, Manager Kang. I'm sorry I couldn't take your call right away. I was in the middle of class. Now, I'm off the class."

"That's okay. We are having lunch together. Why don't you come to the office and join us?"

"Okay. I'm on my way. I think it will take about ten minutes from here to the office."

"Okay. Hurry up."

Four people got into Gun-Ho's Land Rover and headed to Cheonggye Mountain after passing the Yangjae four-way intersection. Gun-Ho's party arrived at Yetgol Village. Ji-Young seemed to love the place.

"Wow. This place looks like the countryside. Whoa, look at that pumpkin over there!"

Gun-Ho took his employees to a restaurant called 'YetgolToseong.' The restaurant specialized in a grilled pork dish. This restaurant became more famous a few years later after the actor— Il-Gook Song had a meal there with his triplets.

Ji-Young screamed again.

"Whoa, this restaurant looks like a traditional Korean house. The food here will be very delicious!"

The restaurant was large, and thankfully it was not crowded since it was a weekday.

"Since we have to get back to work after lunch, let's just have one glass of Makgeolli*.

"I guess Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim can drink more."

Everyone laughed at what Manager Kang said.

"Okay, then let's have one glass of Makgeolli and Min-Hyeok will finish the remaining Makgeolli."

They laughed again when Gun-Ho said it.

"We welcome you, Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim. Let's drink for our company."

"Cheers! For the prosperity of GH Development!"

"For the prosperity of GH Development!"

They enjoyed the pork dish with the scenic view of Cheonggye Mountain.

Manager Kang teased Min-Hyeok.

"Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim, once you go to China, you can have liquor as much as you want, right?"

"I will have to abstain from alcohol. I'm sorry, Manager Kang. I know you have been worried about me because of my drinking habit."

"Oh, no. Don't say that."

"I'm sorry, Manager Kang. Let me pour Makgeolli in your glass."

Manager Kang took the glass that Min-Hyeok handed to him while smiling.

"Don't give me too much liquor. I will have to work after lunch. By the way, if I go on a trip to China, I guess I will have Chinese liquor because of you, Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim."

Ji-Young chipped in.

"I want to go to China too."

Gun-Ho smiled and said,

"Haven't you been in China, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong?"

"I went to Osaka, Japan once with my friends, but I've never been to China."

"If things go well with the joint venture, we will all have a chance to go to China at least once. Since GH Development invested in the joint venture, we will have to make consolidated financial statements as well."

"Consolidated financial statements?"

"You don't have to worry about it. The tax accountant office we work with will guide us on how to do it. By the way, why don't you drink your glass of liquor, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong? Your glass of liquor has been sitting there for a while now."

As Gun-Ho said it, Ji-Young sipped her glass of liquor.

"I blush even with a sip of liquor."

Manager Kang teased her.

"You will look prettier with a blush."

They all laughed along.

Note*

Makgeolli – Korean rice wine.

113 Selling the Land 2 – PART 2

"I have something to tell you since we are all here together."

Everyone looked at Gun-Ho.

"Once we made an actual contract for the joint venture next month, we will have a presentation in Seoul to attract Korean companies into the industrial park."

"Where will it be held?"

"We haven't decided the exact location yet; however, I am thinking of the Koreana Hotel since its location is easy to access."

"Koreana Hotel? The one close to Gwanghwamun Gate?"

"Yes. When Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim and I go to China next month we will discuss more details with our co-venturers. Once we decide the location, I will let you know. Then you will have to make a reservation right away. Manager Kang, I want you to make a reservation for the hotel."

"Okay."

"There is a large hall called Gloria Hall in Koreana Hotel. I was told it could hold about 200 people. I want you to make a reservation of that hall."

"Okay, sir."

"Also, check the price of advertisement of the size of about 17 centimeters by 37 centimeters. I am considering newspapers of Economics and Jojoongdong for the ad."

Gun-Ho continued to talk about the roles that everyone needed to take for a successful presentation.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, please prepare drinks and take care of the reception."

"Should I prepare for 200 people?"

"We might not have 200 people that day; however, we should prepare for 200 people. Let's have green tea and coffee. We will also have to distribute pamphlets that will be prepared by China. We will prepare a guest book as well."

"Okay."

"And, Min-Hyeok, make 200 copies of the pamphlet. We will need to translate the pamphlet into the Korean language. I know someone who can do the translation; he is a Chinese language instructor at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. I will ask him. We will also have an individual interview with the participants after the presentation. I will take Group A, and you take Group B. You will have to study and memorize about the industrial park when we visit China next month."

"Okay. I will visit the site in China again and will memorize the contents of the pamphlet."

"Also, make the presentation material with PowerPoint and if you incur any cost by doing so, just let Ms. Ji-Young Jeong know."

"Okay."

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, for all the expenses incurred in preparing the presentation, we will send a bill to the joint venture, so make sure not to mix with the receipts of GH Development."

"Okay, sir."

"I am sorry if I talked too much about work. We are here to enjoy our lunch, don't we?"

"That's okay, sir. We really liked the lunch. Thank you."

Manager Kang said. Min-Hyeok also added to it; his face was already red because of the liquor he drank.

"I've been stressed about what I would have to do in preparation for the presentation. But since you clearly assign the work to each of us, I feel relieved. I think I can handle my part."

While Gun-Ho was paying for lunch at the counter, Manager Kang, Ji-Young, and Min-Hyeok were making a joke to each other and laughing together. His employees looked happy.

After dropping them off at the office, Gun-Ho wanted to take a rest. He felt sleepy, probably because of the glass of liquor he had during the lunch.

"Let's go somewhere to take a rest. I don't want my employees to see me take a nap in the office. It would look ugly and not appropriate."

Gun-Ho headed to Novotel Ambassador Hotel which was close to his office. He sat at a café in the lobby and fell asleep. He had a dream.

In his dream, he was still working at the plastic factory in Hwaseong City as an injection molding worker. It was the time when he first started working at the factory. The factory manager was yelling at the production team leader.

"This product, R-1640. Who did this? The new worker, Gun-Ho Goo did this? What did you do when he was making a mess like this?"

The factory manager kicked the team leader's shin.

"I'm... I'm sorry, sir."

"Your saying sorry doesn't help the situation at all! What are you going to do with all these 6,000 products?"

"What's wrong with Gun-Ho Goo? He is a college graduate, right? Then how come he can't do a better job than the other workers who didn't even finish high school? It has been a year already since he joined our factory!"

"I'm so sorry, sir. I will let him go."

"We will have to take all our products back. You go to the client site and take care of it! And take Gun-Ho Goo with you!"

"I will do that, sir."

Gun-Ho got slapped in the face by the team leader.

"You stupid a*shole! I can do better work than you even when I am drunk. Get in the truck! We will have to go to the client site to take our products back!"

The truck was heading to somewhere else instead of their client site.

"Shouldn't we go to Wonil Tech in Bongdam Town?"

"You, idiot f*cker! We take parts from Wonil Tech to assemble and send the product to JoyangMobis. You don't f*cking know that yet?"

"I... I see."

"JoyangMobis claimed for defective products to Wonil Tech, so Wonil Tech asked us to take them back! You stupid f*cking a*shole!"

JoyangMobis was located in Namyang Town, Hwaseong City. It was a huge company with all sorts of modern technology. At the entrance, a guard asked them to write down their name and address on the visitor book and to hand a photo ID to him before they could get in.

"Whoa, it is huge."

"You, f*cker, you are not here to have a tour! Put the visitor's pass on your chest and follow me!"

The production team leader took Gun-Ho to a storage. The sign on the storage was written in English.

Inside the storage, there was a pile of products with company names that delivered the products to them. At the storage entrance, a staff in a uniform let people in, only those who had an authorized ticket to take products back.

"We are from Hwaseong Industry. We came to pick up R-1640 that was returned to Wonil Tech."

The production team leader told the staff at the entrance in a servile attitude with a smile.

"What about Wonil Tech? Are they not coming?"

"They will. We are their subcontractor and we came to pick up their products for them. Here is the ticket."

A forklift truck started loading the 2.5-ton truck that the team leader drove, with the products that were returned.

Gun-Ho looked around the factory. It was so big that it looked several times larger than a playground in high school. There were a lot of workers as well.

"Sir, they probably have more than 1,000 workers here, right?"

"Why do you want to know about it? You, son of b*tch. They said they have over 3,000 workers."

"Wow. I wonder what kind of person owns this large factory."

"There is a rumor that the president here is a relative of H-Group's daughter-in-law. You f*cker."

Gun-Ho felt said and thought,

'A person can't succeed in Korea without the right family, academic education and network. Then what should a person like me do? I want to work at a company like this. That is probably impossible in this life, huh?'

"Whew."

"You son of b*tch, don't just stay there and sigh. Get ready to go back to our factory!"

"I'm sorry, sir. You had to come here because of me..."

"You know that huh? You can just get fired and find another factory to work at. But what am I going to do?"

"I'm so sorry."

"Do you see all the products that were returned there? It's a waste, don't you think?"

"Can't we recycle it?"

"Recycle my as*. You son of b*tch! Not everything can be recycled. Those products cannot be recycled, you stupid f*cker!"

"All of them?"

"Disposing of those products cost money too, and those are industrial garbage. You help create more industrial garbage, you human trash!"

Gun-Ho eventually got fired. The work experience at the factory left him a missing nail and burn scars on his left arm. He had to go through this harsh life just because he couldn't pass the level-9 government job exam.

In the dream, Gun-Ho was in someplace else. He was in a farmland somewhere in Hwaseong. He was sitting on the farmland while crying. Someone was walking toward him. It was Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town.

"Chairman Lee."

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo. Why are you crying here? I heard you built a huge factory on a 10,000 pyung land this time, and your factory is bigger than JoyangMobis. Congratulations."

Chairman Lee was extending his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake when Gun-Ho woke up from his dream.

That was the dream Gun-Ho had while he was dozing off at the café in Novotel Ambassador Hotel. Gun-Ho drank his coffee that was placed on the table. The coffee became already cold.

Gun-Ho bit his lips.

"That's right. My goal is not just to invest in some real estate or stocks. I want to have an enormous factory with several thousands of employees."

Gun-Ho gulped down the cold coffee as if it was cold water.

114 Presentation to Attract Companies into the Industrial Park – PART 1

After taking a short nap at the café, Gun-Ho felt much better and he seemed to recover from fatigue. He was about to leave the café when his phone started ringing.

"It's Attorney Young-Jin Kim. Is he calling to ask me to play golf again?"

"It's me, Young-Jin Kim."

"Hey, how are you?"

"When are you going to China to sign the contract for the joint venture?"

"I'm leaving after a month."

"When you get there, say hello to Professor Wang and Seukang Li for me. And I'm actually calling to ask you if you know any good traditional Korean restaurant. I thought you probably know good ones since you should have a lot of chances to go to those places for your business."

"There are a lot in Insa Town, aren't there?"

"The restaurants in Insa Town are good places to eat, not for drinking though. A friend of mine came from the U.S. and I want to treat him in a special place."

"He must be an important client for you."

"Yeah, kind of. He is my client and also a friend. Jien Wang knows him too. He went to Yale University with us as well."

"What is he doing for a living?"

"He is working at Lymondell Dyeon."

"Lymondell Dyeon? It's a very famous chemical company, isn't it?"

"Oh, you know of that company. Not many people know about the company unless they work in that field. How do you know about the company?"

"I used to work at a plastic factory, remember? We used their products."

"Really? That's good. Why don't you join us, Gun-Ho? He is a friend of Jien Wang; we are then all friends, right? He is the same age as us."

"Well, I don't speak English. I don't want to make the meeting uncomfortable."

"It's fine. I will be there interpreting for you."

"But still... You will be uncomfortable too if I join you there."

"I insist. Join us and tell me a good place to go with him."

"I know one place."

"Where? Reserve the restaurant for tonight then. I will treat you; I mean our law firm will treat us."

"Really? I guess I will have fun tonight."

Gun-Ho made a call to Ms. Jang at Hannam Town.

"President Goo? How have you been?"

"I'd like to make a reservation for three people for dinner tonight."

"What time are you coming?"

"Umm, let's make it around 7 pm."

"Is your party all young people like you, President Goo?"

"That's right. One of them is American."

"Oh, then I will prepare our young ladies who can speak English."

"You have ladies who can speak English?"

"Hahaha. Of course. We can cover Japanese and English."

"Wow. Your restaurant is an international business."

"Hahaha. President Goo, you do international business as well. I heard you will participate in a joint venture."

"My business is with China."

"China is doing very well these days. One of our clients who is a government official brought a Chinese person last week. Our client said he is a very important person."

"Who was it?"

"We are a secret bar, President Goo. We don't share any information about our guests. Hahaha."

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Let's meet up at the main entrance of Soonchunhyang Hospital in Hannam Town. I will send someone there by 7 pm to pick you up."

"You don't have to send anyone. I can find the restaurant if you send me the address."

"The restaurant has no business sign; you wouldn't be able to find it even with their address."

"A restaurant without a business sign? How do they bring their customers then?"

"Right. There is a weird restaurant like that. You will see once you come."

"Okay. Let's go there then. Hannam Town is good. Easy to access from my home at Daechi Town and the hotel where my American friend is staying."

Gun-Ho had a haircut and he was getting ready for dinner in Hannam Town. He wore a suit with a dazzlingly white shirt and a tie. He even applied perfume lightly that he purchased at a duty-free shop on the way home from China. Gun-

Ho drove his Land Rover heading to Hannam Town while humming.

Gun-Ho arrived at the secret restaurant and bar, 'Pine.'

"Pine, it has been a while."

There were two bouncers standing at the entrance; they looked like in their late 20s or early 30s. They were wearing a black suit and stood there with good posture. They respectively asked Gun-Ho.

"Did you make a reservation with us, sir?"

"Yes, I did."

"Are you by any chance President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"That's me."

"I will show you the way. Please follow me."

When Gun-Ho entered through the door, Ms. Jang who was wearing a beautiful Korean traditional dress ran to Gun-Ho.

"President Goo! Welcome to Pine. You always look like a groom whenever I see you. Hahaha."

Ms. Jang led Gun-Ho to a room that was decorated with a folding screen bearing folk painting. There was a floor table covered with white paper and six-floor cushions embroidered with a crane, placed on the floor.

Ms. Jang took Gun-Ho's jacket and hung it on a hanger.

"You look different, President Goo. Last time I saw you, you looked like someone who just came to the city from the countryside. Now, you look like a sophisticated businessman. Hahaha."

"Really? Haha. People change with time, I guess."

"Where are you supposed to meet with your party?"

"Could you send one of you waiters to the main entrance of Soonchunhyang

Hospital? They would be easy to be found; one is Korean and the other is American."

"Sure, I will send someone there."

"The Korean man's name is Young-Jin Kim. He is an attorney at Kim&Jeong."

"Oh, Kim&Jeong? Several senior attorneys from there come to our bar often."

"And you can't tell me their names."

"Now you know."

Ms. Mi-Hyang Jang pinched Gun-Ho's arm lightly. Gun-Ho could smell her perfume.

When Gun-Ho was having warm tea, he heard people talking outside.

"I guess they arrived."

The room door was opened; Young-Jin Kim and his American friend entered the room. Gun-Ho stood up to greet them.

"Hey, Gun-Ho. Good to see you, man. I never expected to see a place like this inside Seoul City. My American friend couldn't stop saying 'wonderful.'"

"Really? I was hoping you liked the place."

"This is Richard Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon."

Gun-Ho and Amiel greeted each other and exchanged their business cards. Gun-Ho always carried two versions of his business cards. One was written in Korean and Chinese, and the other one was written in Korean and English.

"A real estate development company?"

Amiel stared at Gun-Ho's business card for a while.

"Let's have a seat."

Gun-Ho showed the floor cushion to sit.

"I'm not sure if your American friend could sit on the floor."

"He is fine. He is living in Tokyo right now. He doesn't have any problem with sitting on the floor."

Amiel looked around the room.

"This place is wonderful!"

Amiel showed his interest—particularly in the folk painting on the folding screen.

"Attorney Kim, can you tell him that the folding screen he is staring at right now is antique, about 500 years old, and the price is 1 billion won."

Attorney Kim interpreted what Gun-Ho said to Amiel while laughing.

"What?"

Amiel's eyes widened in surprise.

Gun-Ho and Young-Jin laughed loud by looking at Amiel's facial expression.

Ms. Jang entered the room.

"Are you having fun here? What's so funny?"

"Oh, this is Mi-Hyang Jang. She is a famous actress in the old days."

"Oh, really? I'm Young-Jin Kim."

"This guy is an attorney at Kim&Jeong."

"We have several clients from Kim&Jeong, senior attorneys. But don't ask me who, because I can't tell. Hahaha."

"Oh, really? I love the atmosphere of this place. My friend here from the U.S. loves the place as well."

While they were talking, the waiters brought a big floor table that was already set with all sorts of Korean food and liquor. Amiel looked at the food on the

table with a curious look on his face. He started trying and tasting each dish.

115 Presentation to Attract Companies into the Industrial Park – PART 2

Gun-Ho, Attorney Kim, and Amiel started drinking at the restaurant & bar—Pine in Hannam Town. Their room door was opened and three beautiful young ladies in their 20s entered the room. They were wearing a traditional Korean dress.

"Oh, wonderful!"

"This guy looks so happy to see the young ladies."

"Who wouldn't?"

Another young lady entered the room. She was carrying a Geomungo*. She was the same girl who had joined Gun-Ho's party when he had come to the bar with Chairman Lee. She seemed to recognize Gun-Ho as well; she nodded her head to Gun-Ho.

Richard Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon craned his neck to get a better view of the girl with a musical instrument.

She started playing music; it was beautiful.

Gun-Ho couldn't tell which music she was playing, but it was touching his heart. It sounded sad and also fantastical.

Amiel was listening to the music with his eyes closed. Knowing Amiel couldn't see what Gun-Ho was doing, Gun-Ho looked at Amiel's business card again closely.

His business card said that he was the president of the exclusive distributor in Japan for Lymondell Dyeon and the president of a subsidiary company in Asia. The other side of the business card was written in Japanese.

"So, their products in Korea were from Japan?"

Gun-Ho was thinking about it when Attorney Kim tapped his arm.

"Why aren't you drinking, President Goo? These pretty ladies poured liquor in your glass already."

"Sure. I'll drink."

When the lady finished playing the Geomungo, Amiel clapped loudly and shouted 'wonderful.'

The lady sitting next to Amiel told him to drink one more glass of liquor in English. Amiel seemed to be satisfied with the fact that he could communicate with the lady in English. He started talking with the lady.

Amiel also talked with the ladies who were sitting next to Gun-Ho and who was sitting next to Attorney Kim. They all could speak English, and they all talked in English except Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho couldn't say anything in English, so he just sat there and kept drinking.

"I'm the only one here who can't speak English. It's embarrassing."

"Oh, you look upset, sir. You just keep drinking without saying anything."

The lady sitting next to Gun-Ho put a crab meat into Gun-Ho's mouth.

Gun-Ho asked Attorney Kim to drink one more glass of liquor.

"Hey, Attorney Kim. Tell your friend that I used to work in a plastic factory and the factory used the products made by Lymondell Dyeon."

Attorney Kim told Amiel that Gun-Ho used to work in a big company where they used the Lymondell Dyeon products and he was now about to start a joint venture with the Chinese provincial government. He added that Gun-Ho and the Chinese government already signed the letter of intent. Attorney Kim seemed to exaggerate a bit, Gun-Ho thought.

"Oh, really?"

Amiel's eyes widened and he took out Gun-Ho's business card from his pocket and looked at it again.

"It's a real estate development company."

"Yeah. This company is known to be a company without debt."

"Really?"

Amiel looked at Gun-Ho with his arms crossed.

Attorney Kim tried to add fun to the conversation.

"Hey, President Goo. Tell Amiel that you want to operate an exclusive distribution agency of Lymondell Dyeon for the Korean Market."

Attorney Kim didn't wait for Gun-Ho's response and asked Amiel right away.

Amiel seemed to think about it.

Gun-Ho said while giving a glass of liquor to Attorney Kim.

"That's not my intention."

"Then what? This could be your opportunity. Lymondell Dyeon doesn't give the exclusive distribution right to just anyone."

"There should be a company that imports Lymondell Dyeon products from the distribution agency in Japan. That's not what I want."

"What do you want then?"

"I want to produce their products in Korea."

"What? You want to manufacture their products here?"

"I understand that they won't share critical technology with us, but I guess I can still operate a chemical plant that produces chemical compounds."

When Attorney Kim tried to interpret what Gun-Ho said to Amiel, Gun-Ho stopped him.

"Don't. If they want to open a plant in Korea, they would select the one that already has experience and ability to do it."

"What do you mean by ability?"

"A company that already has a factory to produce chemical compounds, for example."

"I see."

While Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim talked to each other, fortunately, Amiel was also busy in talking with the lady sitting next to him.

"Could you elaborate on the production of chemical compounds?"

"I meant that we could bring basic materials from Lymondell Dyeon and process them. For example, we add plasticizer, filler, or pigments to the materials and produce the final products."

"In order to do that, you will need the right equipment and plant, I see."

"Right."

"Hmm."

"However, if you open a factory like that in Korea, you won't succeed."

"Why is that?"

"Because the Korean market is too small. You have to target China and Asia market to succeed."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho went on while pouring liquor in Attorney Kim's glass.

"Do you know what I really want to do? I used to work in a factory. I was a factory worker in a small factory."

"Hmm."

"The reason why I run a real estate development company, invest in the stock market, and participate in a joint venture with China to build an industrial park is because I want to open a huge international manufacturing company in the future."

"Hmm."

"I will acquire a manufacturing company someday. When I do that, please set up a meeting again with Amiel for me."

"If you open a sizable manufacturing company, you will have several thousands of employees. Wouldn't it hard to manage them?"

"I don't want to manage the company or employees. I will hire a CEO to do the job and I want to sit back and control the company behind the scene."

"Hmm."

"I believe a chemical plant has to be operated by someone who studied chemicals, and a construction company needs to be run by someone who studied civil engineering or architecture. That is a necessary setting in order to maintain a good quality of products or services. I just want to let them do their job and sit back while watching them working and encourage them. I don't mean to be a big player in a private loan market or anything like that. I want to be a big player who controls big companies behind the scene."

"Just like Howard Hughes—the reclusive billionaire?"

"Well, I'm not sure if I can be as successful as he was."

"I do admire you, Gun-Ho and I respect you. I'm sure you will be the number one big player in Gangnam someday. Let's drink to it."

The night grew late at the secret bar.

The bar was filled with the melody of Gayageum and the sound of people's laughing. They all had a good time.

It was time to call it a night. Amiel held Gun-Ho's hand and said,

"Can you meet me sometimes? I want to get to know you and be friends with you. It seems that we can be good friends. You seem to know a lot about the chemical field in addition to the real estate."

"Sure. Let's be friends."

"Come visit me in Tokyo. There are secret bars like this in Tokyo as well. They do play music and dance."

Attorney Kim clapped and said,

"That sounds great. You two seem to get along fine."

The three men walked out of the bar while staggering. I guess I will have to call for a designated paid driver again.

Gun-Ho went to work the next morning. His head hurt.

It seemed that he drank too much last night.

Gun-Ho walked out of his office after reviewing and signing the daily report. After he ate a blowfish hangover soup, he went to a sauna. While sitting in a sauna, he thought of a lot of things.

"I currently have 10 billion won worth of Kumho Chemical stock. Should I buy more?"

Gun-Ho closed his eyes while enjoying the relaxing feeling in the sauna.

"After I set aside 1.5 billion won for the joint venture from the amount of 8 billion won of the sales proceeds of the land in Gangdong District, I have 6.5 billion won in my bank account. Should I invest all of them in the Kumho Chemical stock?"

Gun-Ho splashed warm water on his body.

"When there was a sign that the two owner brothers of Kumho Asiana Group were about to fight each other over the company, many people speculated that the company's stock price would go up. Little people in the stock market started purchasing their stock accordingly, just like honey bees that are gathered around

flowers. However, after two months when they realized the stock's price didn't go up much, many little people sold their stock."

Gun-Ho made his decision.

"I have 6.5 billion won in my bank account. I will use 5 billion out of it and invest all in the Kumho chemical."

When Gun-Ho came back to his office, he purchased more stock of Kumho chemical with his 5 billion won.

"Okay, I have now 15 billion won worth of the Kumho Chemical stock. Maybe I can become the major shareholder of Kumho Chemical."

Gun-Ho decided to give enough time to the stock and enjoy running his business while waiting for the stock price to increase.

"Two brothers will not easily reconcile."

Gun-Ho smiled.

Note*

Geomungo – A traditional musical instrument of Korea

116 Joint Venture 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a call from Jien Wang.

"Gun-Ho, can you come to China on the 15th of this month for the joint venture contract? I just talked with Seukang Li. I don't have a lecture on the 15th so I can come as well."

"15th? Give me one second; let me check my schedule."

Gun-Ho had no schedule that day.

"Okay. Let's do that on the 15th of this month. I will come to Shanghai directly this time without stopping by Hangzhou City and come to Kunshan City."

"Jinxi Construction Company will send a car to Shanghai Airport to pick you up."

"That sounds good."

"Okay, see you then."

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"Min-Hyeok, we are going to China on the 15th of this month. We will sign the joint venture contract then."

"That early? I had only two months to learn Chinese."

"You can continue learning it once you get to China."

"I think I prepared everything I had to. Let me know if there is anything else I need to prepare or take with me."

"You can find all you need in China. They even sell Korean red chili paste. Well, if you want, bring an electric blanket and dry seaweed."

"Dry seaweed?"

"Yeah, if you miss Korean food, that will help."

"Haha. Got it."

Once he got off the phone with Min-Hyeok, Gun-Ho got concerned about Min-Hyeok's Chinese fluency.

"Should I find an interpreter in Shanghai? I guess it will be hard to find an interpreter in Kunshan City. Maybe I can find one in Suzhou City that is close to Kunshan City."

Gun-Ho leaned back in his seat while thinking about finding an interpreter when an idea flashed through his mind.

"Why didn't I come up with the thought earlier?"

Gun-Ho thought about Mae-Hyang Kim, the Korean Chinese who he had worked with when he was running his restaurant in China. He opened his old notebook to find her phone number. He made an international call to the number he found.

"Who is calling?"

"I'm President Goo. The restaurant owner of the hotel in Hangzhou."

"Oh, my goodness! President Goo? How have you been?"

"I'm doing well. What are you doing these days, Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim?"

"I'm in Qingdao. Do you remember that I went back to my hometown? Things didn't work out there. So now I'm in Quindao working at a Korean food company."

"Really?"

"Is something going on, sir?"

"I'm calling because a friend of mine needs an interpreter. He is working in Kunshan City close to Suzhou City. I guess you are not available for the job since you are already working at a company."

"Hahaha, right, I don't think I can help you with it."

"What about Eun-Hwa Jo? Where is she currently working?"

"She is in Jiaxing City next to Shanghai. I haven't talked to her for a while. Why don't you call her?"

"Okay. I will call her."

Gun-Ho got off the phone with Mae-Hyang and thought that something was not right between the two ladies.

"Hmmm. I guess they fought each other or something. Otherwise, why would she ask me to call Eun-Hwa Jo directly?"

Gun-Ho made a call to Eun-Hwa. The phone kept ringing for a while before someone picked it up.

"Hello? May I talk to Eun-Hwa Jo?"

"Who is it?"

"I'm President Goo."

"Huh? Who is President Goo?"

"Remember the restaurant in a hotel in Hangzhou City?"

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, I am."

"Oh, my gosh. It's President Goo. It's really good to hear from you, sir."

"Are you in Jiaxing City now?"

"Yes, I am. How did you know?"

"I just talked with Ms. Mae-Hyang Kim."

"Oh, well, I don't talk to her anymore."

"What happened? You two were very close friends."

"Well, there was a man whom Mae-Hyang really liked, but that man liked me. That's what happened."

Gun-Ho now understood why these two didn't talk to each other any longer.

"Haha, really?"

"I am in Jiaxing City right now, but I'm thinking of moving to either Shanghai or Ningbo City."

"Why?"

"The Korean company I am working for right now in Jiaxing went broke. The president ran away to Korea and it seems that he's not coming back."

"Geez."

"A company in Ningbo City offered me a position with a monthly salary of 2,000 Yuan; I think I will take that job."

"Ms. Eun-Hwa Jo, I'm actually calling you because of my friend. He is starting a joint venture with China in Kunshan City, and he is looking for an interpreter."

"How much will he pay for an interpreter?"

"I'm not sure, but I guess he will pay at least 2,000 Yuan."

"What about a place to stay?"

"You mean rent? I believe they provide the rent in a current market price in that city."

"If he can give me 500 Yuan for the rent, I will take the job. I think he will have a hard time finding an interpreter in Kunshan City because it's not a big city."

"I'm coming to Kunshan City on the 15th. Why don't you come then? I will be staying in the Crown Plaza Hotel."

"Give me your phone number, sir."

"You can use my old number. I'm still using the same number."

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Can we talk? Is it a good time?"

"It's good. What's up?"

"When starting a joint venture, how much should I pay to the person or the business entity who introduced me to the co-venturer?"

"You mean the broker commission? Well, it depends on the contract you made with them."

"What if there was no such contract?"

"Well, maybe about 1% of the investment funds? I can find out the exact number if you want."

"That's not necessary. That's good enough. Thank you."

Gun-Ho wanted to give the commission fee to Jien Wang who had been helping Gun-Ho until now to make the joint venture work out. He just wanted to know the usual practice in the field in order to properly pay him.

"The total investment fund is 3,000,000 dollars. 1% of it would be 30,000 dollars, and it is a bit more than 30 million won. I think I can handle the amount."

Gun-Ho didn't know that both parties of the joint venture could split up in paying the 30,000 dollars.

"Wait a minute. 1% of the investment amount is not a small amount. In my case, it is just 3 million dollars joint venture, but if the joint venture was a 100 million or even a 1 billion won project, 1% of it would either be 1,000,000 or 10,000,000 dollars."

Gun-Ho thought he would have to be careful when he would do another joint venture in the future because he had to think of the commission fee he had to pay in addition to his investment fund.

On the 15th, Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok went to China.

At the lobby in Crown Plaza Hotel in Kunshan City, Eun-Hwa was waiting for Gun-Ho.

"Oh, Ms. Eun-Hwa Jo! You seemed to lose weight a bit. You look great. This is Min-Hyeok Kim. He will work as the president of the joint venture."

"I'm Eun-Hwa Jo. I look forward to working with you, sir."

"I'm the one who looks forward to working with you. It's really nice to meet you."

Gun-Ho handed a pamphlet of the joint venture to Eun-Hwa. It had a brief description of the joint venture business. Eun-Hwa seemed to be satisfied since the company she would be working for was a joint venture with the government rather than a small and financially unstable company. Eun-Hwa extended her hand to Min-Hyeok for a handshake.

"I will call you Jin-jjong (President Kim) from now on."

"Jin-jjong?"

Gun-Ho laughed because it reminded him of those days when she called him G-jjong.

"Jin-jjong sounds better. She used to call me G-jjong before."

Min-Hyeok laughed along.

"There will be a contract signing in the afternoon. Deputy Mayor Seukang Li, the construction director of Kunshan City, the president, and the planning director of Jinxi Construction Company and some other people will be attending the contract signing. Oh, Jien Wang—the professor at Zhejiang University—will be here too."

"Okay, sir."

Eun-Hwa responded with her shiny eyes.

"I will introduce them to you."

"Thank you, sir."

"Where are you staying right now?"

"I'm in a Chodaeso*. The daily rent there is 20 Yuan."

"Jin-jjong, why don't you pay for her rent until she finds her own place?"

"Okay, I will do that."

Eun-Hwa smiled broadly.

People started coming into the hotel in the afternoon. Seukang Li, Jien Wang, and people from Jinxi Construction Company arrived. They greeted Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok with a smile.

"Ni Hao!"

"Ni Hao!"

They were effusive in greeting each other by loudly saying 'Ni Hao' to every single person. Seukang Li and Jien Wang knew that Eun-Hwa was the interpreter right away when they saw her.

"You already found an interpreter. She seems to be good at interpreting. Where did you go to school?"

"I graduated from Jilin University and I studied Language."

"That's good. You have a decent north accent."

Seukang Li and Jien Wang liked her. People from Jinxi Construction Company exchanged a handshake with Eun-Hwa as well. Eun-Hwa especially quickly got close with Dingpun from Jinxi Construction Company, maybe because Dingpun was a female worker like herself.

Note*

Chodaeso - Similar to a motel in Korea

117 Joint Venture 1 – PART 2

People entered the event hall for the contract signing of the joint venture.

There were journalists present as well.

The event hall looked just like the one when they had signed the letter of intent. They added a big flower basket on the table this time.

The president of Jinxi Construction Company signed on the contract and the journalists started taking pictures of the moment. Everything looked about the same at the time when they signed the letter of intent except there was one more person standing behind Gun-Ho—the interpreter, Eun-Hwa Jo, and she would appear on the picture this time.

Gun-Ho hadn't transferred all of his investment money of 1,500,000 dollars to the joint venture yet. He sent 150,000 dollars for now as a start. The money was sent through Kukmin Bank in the Shanghai location to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China in Kunshan City.

"The business will start with this money."

The vice president of the joint venture—Kkangsin Kkao who used to be the planning director of Jinxi Construction Company was called Kkao-jjong—President Goh—by Chinese people.

Kkao-jjong was looking for Min-Hyeok.

"Jin-jjong—President Kim—! We received funds from Korea. 30 workers from Jinxi Construction Company will join the joint venture. Let's talk about our organizational structure."

"Okay."

Min-Hyeok and Kkangsin Kkao discussed what departments they want to have, and how to assign the workers to each department and so on. In fact, most of the work was done by Kkao-jjong. He was in his 50s, and he had twenty years of work experience. He used to be a planning director in a construction company.

He made the organizational structure, and Min-Hyeok added some idea to it.

"I will closely monitor the joint venture business so they don't waste the precious money that was sent from Korea. That's my role in the joint venture. President Goo told me the same thing before he went back to Korea."

On the plane back to Korea, Gun-Ho thought that Seukang Li was a smart government official.

"He developed the vacant lot in Kunshan City and set up the electricity and water system to build an industrial complex there. That will be recorded as one of his major successful projects. It costs a lot of course, but if we can successfully attract enough companies, then it is a success."

Gun-Ho smiled.

"He wanted me to join the joint venture in order to attract Korean companies into the industrial complex. They didn't ask me to be their co-venturer because of the investment fund. I'm sure they will let me go once they have enough companies in the industrial park. If the business goes well, and they become financially affluent, they will increase capital stock without consideration and ask me to leave. Even if I stay, the duration of the joint venture is set for twenty years, so I will leave the business then anyway."

Gun-Ho calculated how much he would make if they increase the capital stock by 30%.

"My shares will be worth 1.95 billion won. I invested 1.5 billion won, so I would make 450 million won. That's not bad. However, it's not just money I could make from this joint venture. I will learn about Chinese companies, and their business environment, rules, and customs so when I am ready to make an M&A of a Chinese company, I can do it effectively and efficiently. Hahaha."

A flight attendant brought the inflight meal to Gun-Ho.

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho thanked the flight attendant, and she nodded her head to Gun-Ho in return.

"The female flight attendants of Asiana Air are always so pretty. Anyway, how was the fight going between the two owner brothers of Kumho Asiana Group?"

Gun-Ho wanted to check his Kumho stock once he arrived in Korea.

Ji-Young placed a fax they received on Gun-Ho's desk.

"What is this?"

It was a weekly report that Min-Hyeok sent to him from China.

"Hmm, where did he download this report form? It looks alright. I guess his 1 and a half years of work experience at a quality assurance department is being utilized after all. I do like his paperwork."

Gun-Ho reviewed the weekly report.

"They finished organizing departments and personnel placement. They found a house to rent for the president and determined the amount of wage for each worker. They also implemented the company policy. The organizational structure and the status of current expenses are attached. Okay, this is good. Min-Hyeok seems to be doing a good job. Since I put my precious 1,500,000 dollars in this business, I, of course, have to have someone there to monitor how my money is spent. That way they will be careful with spending the money."

Gun-Ho signed on the report.

"I will prepare a separate folder for the reports sent from the joint venture."

"Sounds good."

Manager Kang was craning his neck to look at the weekly report of the joint venture.

"Sir, do you want me to ask him to send a daily report instead of a weekly report?"

"It's okay. They should be very busy doing business especially in the beginning."

Gun-Ho smiled while reading an economic newspaper.

"The younger brother of Kumho Asiana Group is pressing his older brother to fulfill the joint management agreement?"

Gun-Ho was not sure what the joint management agreement was about, but he thought the owner brothers' fight would start soon again.

"I've purchased an additional 5 billion won worth of the Kumho Chemical stock a month ago. They already tried to get rid of little investors once. Let me see how much the price had increased."

The price of Kumho Chemical stock had increased twice.

"Hahaha. Of course. My 15 billion won became 30 billion won."

Gun-Ho was smiling broadly while looking at his stock account when Ji-young asked him,

"Sir, you have any good news? I've noticed that you have been smiling for quite a while. Any funny news articles you found online?"

"No, nothing. I was just thinking about something that happened a long time ago."

Gun-Ho was thinking whether he would sell all of the Kumho Chemical stock now since he made 15 billion won already.

"Nah. The real fight between the brothers starts now. New little investors will begin to purchase the stock. They will once more try to get rid of them soon. This time I will do the work with my money. I will leave the stock for one year and wait for the price to increase again substantially. Hahaha."

Min-Hyeo stated on the weekly report that they placed an advertisement in the newspapers in the Shanghai and Suzhou City area. He sent the actual newspaper with the advertisement to Gun-Ho two days later.

"The advertisement looks good. I guess the company has someone who knows how to design."

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"How's it going? You must be very busy there. I just received the newspaper advertisement. Have you received any inquiries yet?"

"We have received inquiries from over ten companies. I guess we would make a contract with two of them. Ten companies were Korean companies that were already doing business in China. I explained to them what the industrial park is about. Kkao-jjong has been talking with several Chinese companies, and one of them would make a contract soon."

"Really? You did a good job."

"We think we will need more companies who show interest. So we are working on an advertisement we could place in a Korean newspaper."

"Really? There should be advertisement firms there who could help you with the advertisement design. I mean Korean advertisement firm."

"Okay, I will find one. But we will still have to work on the contents first. Once we are done with a draft, I will send it to you. Well, I mean I will send you a report."

Min-Hyeok sent Gun-Ho a draft of the advertisement that would be placed on the Korean newspaper.

Gun-Ho called for Manager Kang and Ji-Young.

"Look at this draft."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young carefully looked at the draft.

"Is this done in China? I guess there are many design professionals in China."

"No. It was designed by a Korean company there. The contents and words are done by Min-Hyeok."

"I guess he is good at it. It looks good."

"I can show it to my friend next door—the design company—for her opinion."

"Sure."

Ji-Young took the advertisement draft and went to the office next door.

Jin-Young came back to the office while smiling.

"She said it looks really good, and she confirmed that it was done by a professional."

"Really? Okay then. Manager Kang can start calling newspapers and get a price quote, and also discuss with Min-Hyeok when we should make a reservation at the Koreana hotel for the presentation."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho headed to the Japanese restaurant that was run by President Hee-Yeol Byeon in Yuksam Town for lunch. It was after lunchtime, and there were not many people in the restaurant.

"How's business, sir?"

"Hey, President Goo. You didn't bring your car today?"

"I walked all the way here from the office. It is a good exercise."

The chef with a shaved head came out from the kitchen to greet Gun-Ho while laughing.

"President Byeon, your business seems to be doing very well. President Gwang-Ho Yoo of Yangji Construction said last time that this restaurant is always crowded with customers."

"Yes, we do have many customers coming in, I guess because my nephew is a very good cook. The problem is our debt."

"What about it?"

"Since the restaurant is located in Gangnam, we had to pay high premium and rent."

"How much did you pay?"

"We paid 300 million won for the premium and the rent altogether. We borrowed

money from a bank using my condo as collateral, so we have to pay the loan interest every month, and it is a lot. So even though we are having a lot of customers, we don't make much money."

"I guess the bank who lent you the money is making money instead."

"I guess so. Oh, a customer just came in. Welcome to Minado!"

President Byeon greeted loudly and ran to the new customer while carrying the menu book.

"Hmmm. They have debt... and it is holding them back."

Gun-Ho talked to himself.

118 Joint Venture 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok to ask Min-Hyeok's bank account number in China.

"Why?"

"I'm going to send 30,000 dollars to your account. Can you take it out and give it to Professor Jien Wang? And don't ask me why."

"Okay."

"You have a car allocated to you by the company, right?"

"They excessively gave me an Audi. I have a chauffeur too. The Chinese people here told me that the president of a company should ride a luxurious car with a chauffeur because the president represents the company. It is explained in the last week's report. Did you review it?"

"Yes, I did. Actually, I am the one who told them to get you an Audi. Why don't you go to Professor Wang with the interpreter, Ms. Eun-Hwa Jo in your Audi? If he asks you what the money is for, you just tell him you have no idea, and President Goo told you to give it to Professor Wang."

"Okay."

The next day, Gun-Ho received a call from Jien Wang.

"Hey, President Goo. Why did you send me that much money?"

"That's your commission for introducing me to the joint venture. The investment amount is 3,000,000 dollars, so I gave you 1% of that amount."

"If you wanted to send me the commission, you should have sent me 1% of your investment fund, not 1% of the capital of the company. I will take 15,000 dollars since that's how it works according to the international business practice, and I will send it to Seukang Li to support his political activity. Thank you, President Goo."

"Then assume that I send the other 15,000 dollars to support his political activity as well."

"No, you shouldn't. If you do, we can't keep our good relationship for a long time. Also, it's not a good idea to take the money from a foreigner for that purpose. We three will have another bigger project to do together in the future; let's not mix up funds like this at this time. I will return the 15,000 dollars to the president of the joint venture—Jin-jjong."

"Well, if you insist, Jien."

After a few days, Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok.

"Professor Wang came to the office and placed an envelope on my desk and told me to give it to you. It's money, 15,000 dollars."

"Whew. Okay. Keep it with you for now."

Gun-Ho received another call from Seukang Li as well. His voice was always calm, maybe because he was a government official.

"Gun-Ho? You shouldn't have done that."

"I was just complying with the international business practice."

After a moment of silence, Seukang Li continued to talk.

"Okay, then. Thank you."

It was probably for security reasons but, Seukang Li didn't talk much and hung up the phone after a short conversation.

It was the day of the presentation in order to attract Korean companies into Jinxi Industrial Park.

Seukang Li, Jien Wang and the construction director of Kunshan City came from China to participate in the presentation. The joint venture's president, Min-Hyeok and the vice president, Kkao-jjong joined them.

Gun-Ho asked the college instructor to interpret for him at the presentation; he

was the one who had translated the joint venture's business plan for Gun-Ho before. Manager Kang and Ji-Young came to participate as well; they both were wearing a suit neatly.

They placed a reception table at the entrance of the Gloria Hall in Koreana Hotel, and Manager Kang, Min-Hyeok and Ji-Young greeted the guests there.

"Please take a pamphlet with you."

"Could you sign on the guest book, please?"

"We have prepared a drink over here."

It was almost time to start the presentation. Min-Hyeok entered the hall to set up the PowerPoint he prepared, and Manager Kang grabbed the microphone to proceed with the presentation.

The total guest who came to the presentation was about 100 people. They were businessmen who saw the advertisements in the newspaper. The large Gloria hall was not fully filled with people but enough people came. On the platform, Seukang Li, the construction director of Kunshan City, Jien Wang, Kkao-jjong, and Gun-Ho was sitting on a chair. Manager Kang smoothly led the presentation. He was doing good; it seemed like he practiced a lot.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming today. We are going to start our presentation about the industrial park located in Kunshan City, China. After the presentation, we will have an individual consultation time where you can meet with one of our staff to talk about your opportunity with us. First, let me introduce to you the personnel from China. I will start with the front row. This is Deputy Mayor of Kunshan City—Seukang Li."

Seukang Li stood up and bowed respectfully.

Manager Kang introduced all of the five people on the platform and then introduced Min-Hyeok as well.

"Deputy Mayor of Kunshan City—Seukang Li will explain about the industrial park."

Seukang Li explained about the industrial park in his city in Chinese, and then

the college teacher interpreted for the Korean guests. It seemed that this was not his first time interpreting; he did very well.

After Seukang Li's explanation, Manager Kang introduced the next speaker—Gun-Ho.

"President Gun-Ho Goo from GH Development will explain further about the industrial park. GH Development is a Korean company and the co-venturer of this joint venture."

Gun-Ho held the microphone, and Min-Hyeok opened the PowerPoint. Gun-Ho started explaining while pointing things on the PowerPoint with a stick.

"If you want a factory in Korea right now, about the size of 3,000 pyung, it would cost you 2 billion won. And the monthly rent would be anywhere from 5 million won to 10 million won. The Jinxi Industrial Park in Kunshan City can provide you a factory about the same size for half the price. The monthly rent is 2 million won, and the security deposit is only 1 billion won. As you can see in these pictures, these are newly constructed buildings; they are neat and clean. Please look at the sewage treatment plant here. China has developed significantly, and their technology is highly advanced now. The road here is large enough for a 40-ft container truck to use. You can also enjoy corporate tax-free for the first three years."

Someone in the middle area shouted, "I have a question."

"We will give you plenty of time to ask questions after the presentation."

Gun-Ho was better at explaining about the industrial park and factories rather than Seukang-Li since he knew practical things in the field because of his previous work experiences at factories.

During the Q&A session, people started asking tons of questions.

"How much should we expect to pay for the electricity per kilowatt?"

"What is the maximum power capacity they can provide?"

"What is the duration of the contract?"

"Can we register the factory with the Chinese government under our name?"

"Is it possible to lend money using the factory?"

"How far is the industrial park from the port of Shanghai?"

"What's the average monthly salary for a Chinese worker?"

Gun-Ho answered all of the questions smoothly and clearly.

Some of the participants wanted to visit the site before making their decisions. So, Gun-Ho asked who else wanted to visit the site, and 17 companies hoped to make a visit.

After the presentation, they had an individual consultation time. Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok talked with each company. By that time, about 50 companies were left in the hall hoping to talk about the opportunity.

That day, Gun-Ho made a contract with four companies, and Min-Hyeok did it too with two companies.

After the consultation time, Gun-Ho told Seukang Li how many companies actually made a contract.

"Six contracts? That's what I expected."

"Don't be disappointed yet. There are 17 companies that wanted to visit the site first before they would make a decision. I guess we will make at least two or three contracts from that group after the tour."

Seukang Li assigned work to the joint venture vice president—Kkao-jjong.

"Once we receive the security deposit from those companies that made a contract today, build a prefabricated factory as soon as you can, according to the factory type they selected. Once we have a few factories built on the site, other companies will come to look at them. That will help them decide quickly."

"Okay, sir. Building a factory is our area of expertise."

Gun-Ho smiled.

"Once they receive the security deposit, they will use it to build a factory. If they start receiving the rent from the companies, they will spend less money than I invested. If ten companies move into the industrial park, they will make 20 million won per month, and it will cover the wages of the workers in the joint venture. Well, it's about the same amount I make from the OneRoomTels." Gun-Ho chuckled.

119 Joint Venture 2 – PART 2

The presentation was not bad; it was somewhat successful. Gun-Ho was not satisfied though, but Seukang Li and the president of Jinxi Construction Company evaluated it as a success.

"Sh*t!"

"What's wrong?"

"We had 100 companies that came to see our presentation. And only 6 of them made a contract. That's not enough at all."

"Don't worry about it. If we add two companies that already made a contract in China, we have eight companies so far."

"Our goal is 50 companies. How long will it take to have all 50 companies in the industrial park?"

"Having eight companies is a good start. Once we build eight factories in the industrial park, other companies will notice it, and they will ask about their opportunity with us."

"You think so?"

"Also, you said 17 companies want to visit the site, right? Some of them will make a contract after seeing the industrial park."

"But we have nothing really there yet. Will they make a contract without seeing an actual factory?"

"Actually, we are currently building a factory to show to the visitors. It's like a model home for residential houses. It will be completed on the 25th of this month. So you just make sure to schedule the tour after the 25th."

Manager Kang made a suggestion.

"I will send a letter to the 17 companies who wanted a tour of the industrial park."

We can make a schedule, send a letter, and ask them to pay 100,000 won for the tour application fee. Those companies that pay 100,000 won will not cancel their tour."

"Hmm.

"That's how travel agencies do it for tours abroad."

"Okay, then Min-Hyeok can make the tour schedule, and Manager Kang can write the letters."

"Okay, sir. I will assume that they would leave for China at the end of this month."

Gun-Ho took the people who came from China, and the company staff to Jongro Tower located in Jongro 2-Ga. It was close to the Koreana Hotel so they all could walk there.

"You have done great work today. Let's have dinner. There is a nice buffet restaurant in Jongro Tower; its name is Top Cloud. They have a very nice view."

Chinese people loved the buffet restaurant.

"Heun Hao (Good)! Heun Hao!"

They shouted 'Heun Hao.'

The presentation was done, and Gun-Ho now had spare time. GH Development Company was doing good since it just had to collect rent from OneRoomTels.

Manager Kang brought the paperwork to Gun-Ho.

"It's the letter for the tour of the industrial park."

"Really?"

"And I've attached the program schedule written by Mr. Min-Hyeok Kim, I mean President Kim on the backside of the letter."

"Hmm, it's a two nights and three days tour."

"I thought that is adequate."

"Is this the price for the tour? Isn't it too expensive?"

"According to the travel agency, it is okay to make a high price for the travel expenses if the trip is for the company employees. That's because usually the travel expenses were paid by the company rather than by an individual."

"Hmm, I see."

Gun-Ho signed on the paperwork that Manager Kang brought to him.

15 out of 17 companies sent the tour application fee of 100,000 won to Gun-Ho's office. Two companies seemed to decide not to participate.

"Those 15 companies will not cancel the tour since they already paid the tour application fee."

"Hmm."

"Also, the travel agency said, if the group has 15 or more than 15 people, we can add one more person for free. If you have someone who you want to send with the tour group, please recommend one."

"Really? Haha. That's how it works, huh? Then, why don't you go with them, Manager Kang? You haven't seen the industrial park in China yet. This is your opportunity to do so."

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok who was working in China.

"How's it going?"

"It's going well."

"Really?"

"The factory that we will show to our guests is almost done. Why don't you come and see it?"

"I will come there when there is a board meeting. On the joint venture company's articles of incorporation, who is listed as the board of directors? Is it the

president of Jinxi Construction Company, me, Jin-jjong, and kkao-jjong?"

"Yes, that's correct."

"I believe we have two board meetings per year. I will see you at the next board meeting then. Oh, also tell them that I will send the remaining 1,350,000 dollars of my investment fund today since I previously sent 150,000 dollars already."

"Today?"

"Yeah."

"They actually kept asking me when you would send the 1,350,000 dollars to them. I think they need money to build the factory to show to the guests."

Manager Kang told Gun-Ho that they received the travel expenses from the 15 companies. They charged 1,100,000 won for each person and they received 16,500,000 won.

"Before the trip, we will have a meeting so we can explain to them about the tour."

"A meeting?"

"Yes. We will talk about the program schedule, and the place we will meet at the airport, and we will also verify their passports and visas. Also, I thought it was a good idea for them to meet each other before the trip."

"Where will you have the meeting?"

"For the convenience of the people who are in the province, I want to reserve the KTX train station office in Yongsan Station for three hours."

"Do they have that kind of space at Yongsan Station?"

"Yes, they do."

"I will ask Min-Hyeok to give the tour group special treatment and kindness."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho opened the stock chart of the Kumho Chemical.

"Hmm, after the stock price went up twice, its trendline is about to change to downward. Maybe I should help the trend by selling some of my stock, about 3 billion won worth of stock."

Gun-Ho had 30 billion won worth of stock of Kumho Chemical, and decided to sell 10% of it, and keep an eye on the chart.

"Once it becomes a downward trendline, the little investors will roar."

The departure date of the tour to the industrial park in China came around.

"You are leaving tomorrow?"

"Yes."

"Min-Hyeok already reported that the factory to show to the guests is completed. And they are building two additional factories right now."

"Right, I heard of it too. It seems that there are two Korean companies that want to move into the industrial park as soon as possible. One is a Korean company in Korea and the other one is a Korean company currently doing business in China. They already paid their security deposit."

"The tour group will be able to see the construction site of the factory."

"I think so."

"Ms. Ji-young Jeong! Do we have any company policy about the business trip expenses?"

"We don't."

"Then, give Manager Kang 1,000,000 won for the trip now."

"Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok in China.

"15 people, oh I mean 16 people including Manager Kang will arrive there

tomorrow. Treat them well, okay?"

"Don't worry about it. I already reserved the best hotel and the best restaurant for them. The factory is completed, and I was impressed by their skills and technology. It was really quick."

"Really? I believe Jinxi Construction Company is one of the best companies in the construction field in China. They have a lot of skillful engineers."

"They already hung a banner that says they are welcoming the Korean companies' tour group."

"Oh, really?"

"And, they placed a large stone tower at the main entrance of the industrial park. It says 'Jinxi Industrial Park.' You haven't seen it yet, right? I will take a picture of it and send it to you."

"Oh, okay."

"Also, we prepared karaoke for the tour group. Manager Kang said, he would collect the karaoke fee from the people who would participate in it."

"I see. Well, good luck and I'm counting on you."

"Don't worry about it!"

"Min-Hyeok, is your monthly salary from the joint venture 5,000 Yuan?"

"Yes."

"I know it's too little. Just wait until the board meeting. I will raise it then."

"It's okay. The company pays for my rent, so it's not bad. I send my mom the monthly salary I received in Korea."

"Really? Let's just do our best here. We will have a bright future."

"Thank you."

120 Requital 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made a call to the general affairs manager—Seon-Hong Hwang whom he used to work with when he was in Asan City.

"Director Hwang? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, Gun-Ho! How have you been? By the way, I am not a director; I am a manager."

"You are still a manager? I guess the company doesn't recognize your hard work. You have been working so hard for the company for a long time."

"The company cannot afford to promote anybody because of its financial situation."

"You are getting paid on time, right?"

"I haven't received the last month's salary yet. However, fortunately, our company quickly let some workers go to handle the situation, but Mulpasaneop is in trouble."

"Is it that serious?"

"Mulpasaneop hasn't paid to its employees for the past three months, and some employees already filed a lawsuit for unpaid wages against the company."

"Wow. It is serious."

"You seem to be doing very well, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. Do you happen to have any position I can take?"

"Haha! I'm not doing that well."

"I'm having a hard time every single day these days."

"Do you have time today? Would you like to have a beer with me at Dujeong Town since it's Friday?"

"Today? You no longer live in this area. Are you going to come to Cheonan?"

"I will, of course, go there to have a drink with you. I want to see you too."

"Really? Haha. Okay then. I will see you at 7 pm."

For the first time in a long time, Gun-Ho was heading to Cheonan in his Land Rover. He had mixed feelings.

"I drove this road when I went to YS Tech for a job interview in Dunpo Town, Asan City. I was, at that time, working in a gas delivery company. That was already several years ago."

Gun-Ho remembered he sang Bohemian Rhapsody in his shabby car on the way to YS Tech at that time. He started humming the same song again.

"Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?"

Caught in a landslide. No escape from reality."

"I cried a lot while singing this song then. Whew. I suffered all those years because of money."

Gun-Ho compared his current self with his past self at that time.

"I have two condos now: one is for my parents, and the other is the one that I'm living in, which is worth 1.5 billion won. I have cash of another 1.5 billion won in my bank account and I also have 3 billion won worth of stocks. The capital of my company—GH Development is 900 million won, and the office-tel for the company is 500 million won. Additionally, I have 1.5 billion won put in the joint venture with China as well. So, the total asset is 35.9 billion won. But I still feel hungry."

Gun-Ho parked his car at Dujeong Station. He then headed to the Izakaya pub after meeting with General affairs manager Hwang at the station.

"We didn't have to come to this nice place. We could have just gone to a deep-fried chicken restaurant where we can have some beer as well."

"No, I want to buy you a drink in a nice place."

Gun-Ho ordered flatfish sashimi and deep-fried shrimp. For a drink, he ordered Cheongha as General affairs manager Hwang suggested.

"This will cost you a lot."

"Enjoy it."

Gun-Ho placed the sashimi in front of General affairs manager Hwang.

After drinking several glasses of Cheongha, General affairs manager took out his cigarette.

"Is smoking allowed here?"

General affairs manager looked around. When he found no one who was smoking in the pub, he put his cigarette back to his jacket.

"Let's order one more bottle of Cheongha."

Gun-Ho ordered one more bottle.

The company was doing very well when you were working there. It was good days.

"Was it?"

"At that time, we often went out for dinner all together. Now, we are all working quietly."

"President Young-Sik Park must have a hard time to find a way out of that situation. How's he doing? I know he is hot tempered, but I also know that he cares about the people around him."

"The president is not like before; he seems to lose confidence in himself. Mulpasaneop is his brother-in-law's company and it is almost going under after all."

"YS Tech should have diversified its clientele. It shouldn't have heavily relied on one client—Mulpasaneop."

"It's easier said than done. You need connections to be able to diversify the

cliente."

"What about Manager Kim in the accounting team? How is she doing? She had just delivered her baby at that time. The baby must have grown a lot."

"She left the company."

"Why?"

"She got scared when the creditors came to the office and yelled at her. Her husband told her to quit the job."

"She then moved to another company?"

"I heard she is working in an accountant office."

"Does YS Tech still work with the same tax accountant office? The one that is located across the street from the tax office."

"Right, we are still working with the same accountant office. I heard we owe some payment to that office as well."

General affairs manager Hwang drank a lot that day. He was having the third bottle.

"Are you okay? You brought your car, right?"

"It's okay. I can still drive. I know the exact location where the police stop cars for a sobriety test."

"I think you should call for a paid designated driver."

"That's okay. Here. Let me pour liquor in your glass."

"I think I drank a lot already."

"Have some more. You only had one bottle."

"Do you know which accountant office has been working with Mulpasaneop?"

"I don't know. I don't know that much about Mulpasaneop; it's not like I have

someone close to me, who is working there. Oh, I think I saw Mulpasaneop's financial statements in the president's office. I guess I can find out the name of the accountant office by looking at those financial statements."

Gun-Ho wanted to ask him to find out the name of the accountant office, but he didn't ask him. He once caused a money related problem with YS Tech president —Young-Sik Park and he didn't want to do anything that could make him look suspicious again.

"Mulpasaneop must have let go of a lot of workers by now. I remember their factory was huge."

"Their factory is indeed large. More than 300 workers used to work in that factory, and now only half of them are still there."

"You said they couldn't pay their workers for the past several months, right?"

"Mulpasaneop still pays our company for the products we deliver to them. Our president told him he wouldn't be able to send our products to them without getting paid. If we don't provide the products to them, their factory would have to stop working."

Gun-Ho dragged his chair close to General affairs manager Hwang and talked to him quietly.

"By the way, I heard that the president of Mulpasaneop and his son who was also working at the same company were not getting along. Is that true?"

"It is true. They don't share the same value in running a company. His son fired several employees who were loyal to the president and filled with his own people. He also recklessly expanded the business to China and blew a lot of money."

"How is the business in China?"

"I don't know about it."

"That's a shame. It's a 1.5 vendor."

"That's right. It is a 1.5 vendor."

The first vendor is the companies that deliver products directly to a big company like Hyundai and Samsung. The second vendor is the companies that deliver their products to those first vendors. There were the third vendors that deliver products to the second vendor, and so on.

For example, DAS Corporation that people now say it is owned by MB delivers products to Hyundai; that means DAS Corporation is the first vendor. Any companies that deliver products to DAS Corporation are the second vendors. The first vendors are large companies with money and technology. Many of them have gross sales revenue of 1,000 billion won.

"So Mulpasaneop is going under because of money."

"I think so. It was not like the first vendor didn't deliver their products to Mulpasaneop or anything like that."

"In order to build another factory in China, they probably used their main factory in Korea as collateral."

"That sounds better than their actual situation. I heard they borrowed money from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund."

"Does the president of Mulpasaneop still go to work these days?"

"You expect me to know too much. How would I know whether their president goes to work or not? I don't work there. Why are you so interested in Mulpasaneop anyway? Are you thinking of getting a job there? Don't. There are a lot of companies way better than that company."

121 Requital 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho and General affairs manager walked out of the Izakaya pub.

"General affairs manager Hwang, you can't even stand straight. I will call a paid designated driver for you."

Gun-Ho asked the Izakaya pub owner to call a paid designated driver for him.

Gun-Ho walked to a motel close to Dujong Station where he had parked his car earlier. He decided to spend a night in a motel rather than driving all the way to Seoul that night.

"Let's stop by Mulpasaneop's factory on the way to Seoul tomorrow morning."

Mulpasaneop's factory was located in Yeongin Town, Asan City.

Even though the factory was not manufacturing products as many as before, the 5,000 pyung large factory still looked majestic. A security guard was still working at the main entrance and there are many trucks in the parking lot. There were just not many people seen outside the factory.

"Let's get the real estate registration of this factory."

As soon as Gun-Ho arrived at his office, he turned on his computer and searched Mulpasaneop on the Internet. He could easily find its address and a location map.

He then opened the court website to request the real estate registration of that factory.

"The provisional seizure has already been issued."

Gun-Ho continued to read the section of the real estate registration where the provisional seizure and the mortgage loans are listed in.

"Sh*t, there are many provisional seizures for unpaid wages. The company seems to be in big trouble."

Gun-Ho was wondering how much the Mulpasaneop factory would be worth.

"The land is over 5,000 pyung, so it would be more than 5 billion won, without adding the price of the factory building since the building is already too old to price."

Gun-Ho wanted to acquire this factory.

"Can I handle their situation? They seem to have a lot of debt."

Gun-Ho started thinking about acquiring the Mulpasaneop's factory.

Manager Kang came back from his business trip to China.

"Jinxi Industrial Park in China is awesome. The land is huge and the newly constructed factory is so big as well. I admire you, sir. You are the co-venturer of that industrial park."

Gun-Ho smiled.

"What did other people say about it?"

"They seemed to fall in love with the industrial park after having a tour of the factory and the industrial park. The required security deposit of 200 million won is not much for the people who run a big factory. I guess many of them will make a contract soon."

"The factory is a prefabricated building. Have you seen any part of it leaking?"

"I... don't know."

"When I worked in a factory before, a prefabricated building had leaking issues. Especially, it rains a lot in the area where the industrial park is located..."

"I haven't heard of the leaking building issue. It is a newly constructed building."

"How's Min-Hyeok? Is he doing well?"

"I didn't know what he was capable of when he was working as a residential manager in the OneRoomTel. He is really doing great as a president of the joint venture in China."

"How great is he there?"

"He is managing workers effectively and he already speaks simple Chinese. And he knows a lot about a factory."

"He used to work in a quality assurance department in a factory. He knows well about ISO too."

"You have good eyes in selecting good workers, sir. President Min-Hyeok Kim looked really different from the time he was working as a residential manager."

"Haha, really?"

"He was a great host for the tour group. He seemed to know how to make their visit pleasant and offer food in a friendly and appropriate way and so on. When we all participated in karaoke, the visitors absolutely loved him."

"That sounds great. I hope that led them to make an actual contract."

"Two companies already made a contract. You will see more details about it in the next weekly report. We could make a contract right away for those two companies because the companies' owners were there, who are the decision makers."

"Haha, really?"

"And, this..."

"What is it?"

"I bought a tie for you at the duty-free shop."

"Haha, really?"

"And this is for Ms. Ji-Young Jeong."

Ji-Young's eyes widened.

"For me?"

"I purchased cosmetics for you."

"Oh, thank you so much."

Ji-Young looked happy and satisfied.

Gun-Ho got lost in thought while looking outside the window.

"They can now build eight factories. The monthly rent from those companies will be about 15,000,000 won. That is enough to pay those 30 workers' wages in China. My friend, Min-Hyeok, I guess you can stay as a president of the company at least for a few years while riding the Audi."

After the joint venture had been established, it became fall after summer.

Gun-Ho received a call from Manager Hwang of YS Tech.

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo? How are you? I am calling to ask you if you happen to know any short-term hard money lender."

"Why? Do you personally need money?"

"No, YS Tech needs to borrow money. The president asked me to look for a hard money lender."

"Did they ask a non-bank financial institution to borrow money?"

"We already borrowed too much money using the factory as collateral, so they refused to lend money to us."

"Didn't Mulpasaneop pay YS Tech for the products yet?"

"They haven't paid for this month yet. It's getting late. We need to pay to our employees soon. We just need 200 million won sharp."

"Hmm."

"Mulpasaneop is currently considering the court receivership."

"Really? You should get the payment for the products delivered to Mulpasaneop as soon as possible. Once they start the court receivership, you might not be able to get the account receivable."

"Nothing much we can do if they just don't pay."

"The president of Mulpasaneop is the YS Tech president's brother-in-law. He should insist on getting his payment."

"I will tell him."

"As to a hard money lender, you can easily find a list of them on the Internet. Just call them."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho wanted to help the YS Tech president since he owed the president big time.

"He doesn't have any asset to use as collateral. If I lend money to him without collateral and if he couldn't pay me back, the relationship between him and me could be broken forever. I should find a way that I can constantly help him, rather than giving him just one-time help."

Gun-Ho was thinking deeply. He could lend 200 million won to him; that was not a problem at all. However, he was worried about the possibility that could hurt the relationship if something went wrong.

After two days, Gun-Ho gave a call to Manager Hwang at YS Tech.

"Did you borrow money from a hard money lender?"

"They said they couldn't lend any money without collateral. After reviewing our financial statements and credit score, they just declined our loan request. F*ck."

"How about the wages you had to pay?"

"We couldn't pay the workers yet, and they are certainly concerned."

"What's the total amount of wage you need to pay for the month?"

"We don't have many employees anymore. We have about 65 workers and 200 million won will suffice."

"Hmm."

"I have to pay my credit card bill this month. I am worried about my payment too."

"Could you tell the president that I will come by tomorrow to talk with him?"

"You are going to meet the president? Why?"

"I think I can get him some money to borrow."

"Really? You shouldn't lend your personal funds to the company. I can see that you are making good money lately but don't use it like this. You could lose all of them."

"No, I just want to talk with him."

"It's 200 million won. You could blow it. You shouldn't lend your personal money. The company should borrow money from a bank or from another company. You are just so naïve."

"I don't have that much money. I just want to introduce a hard money lender that I know."

"Oh, really? In that case, I will let the president know that you are coming tomorrow."

122 Requital 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Manager Hwang from YS Tech.

"I talked to the president. He said he would be available any time in the afternoon tomorrow."

"Okay. I will then come by around 3 pm."

The next day, Gun-Ho started getting ready for the short trip to Asan City to meet with the president of YS Tech, by filling up the tank of his car.

"I told them I would come by around 3 pm, so I guess I'd better have lunch before leaving to Asan City. Which restaurant do I want to go for lunch today? Hmm, let's just eat at home."

Gun-Ho went back to his home. The feeling of loneliness filled the air in his home.

"I bought this spacious condo at the auction as one of my investments. Come to think of it, it is indeed too big for one person to live. Sometimes, I feel scared at night while staying in this 50 pyung large space by myself."

Gun-Ho pulled out some food from the refrigerator such as kimchi, salted fermented oyster, balloon flower root salad, and dried seaweed. The balloon flower root salad was prepared and stored in the refrigerator by the housekeeper who came to Gun-Ho's home to clean the condo and to prepare food for him two or three times per week. Gun-Ho also put some left-over deep fried chicken in the microwave.

"Maybe I should start a family. But I am so dumb in that field. I have never dated a girl before; I was too busy making money. What should I do? It won't be easy for me to start dating a girl at this age. In addition, all the good and decent girls must be already taken."

Gun-Ho had a cup of coffee after his meal.

The only room Gun-Ho was using in this large condo was the master bedroom.

In the master bedroom, there were a bed, a desk, and a bookshelf. All sorts of books about management were placed in the bookshelf. Gun-Ho was once thinking of having a dog out of loneliness and then he decided not to because he realized that he would have to take care of the dog and he was not sure if he could live with all those hairs that a dog would shed.

After brushing his teeth, Gun-Ho headed to Asan City. He drove on the expressway singing Bohemian Rhapsody. He was enjoying the moment.

Gun-Ho entered Dunpo Town in Asan City after getting out of the North Cheonan IC and passing Seonghwan Town. He was passing by the Asan Techno Valley when he decided that,

"I will someday have a huge factory just like one of those in this Techno Valley. I will have an enormous manufacturing factory without fail!"

Gun-Ho could see the YS Tech factory building when he entered into the Shinbong town in Dunpo.

"I'm back here again, and it makes me so emotional."

Gun-Ho's Land Rover slowly entered into the factory yard.

Gun-Ho could see that there were not many factory workers in the factory. There were some workers in uniform but he couldn't recognize any of them.

"It's hard to find a worker who would work for a long time in a small or mid-size company. This company has a high turnover rate and I don't see anyone who I can recognize."

Gun-Ho walked up to the second floor and opened the office door.

"Manager Hwang, I'm here."

"Oh! You came!"

"Is it Mr. Gun-Ho Goo?"

There was another manager in the sales department that recognized Gun-Ho and extended his hand for a handshake. There was a new lady who was sitting at the

desk that was used to be used by Manager Kim in the accounting department.

Manager Hwang was about to go to the president's office to let him know that Gun-Ho was here when Gun-Ho grabbed his arm.

"I will go to see the president by myself."

Gun-Ho knocked on the president's office before he entered the office. The president was looking at his smartphone.

"Sir, I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo!"

The president stood up.

Gun-Ho knelt down on the floor and said,

"Sir, let me make a deep bow to you."

"No, Mr. Goo. What are you doing? Get up."

"I've never forgotten the generosity you had shown me."

"What are you talking about? I haven't really done anything for you!"

"That's not true. You forgave me when I put my hand on the company money. How would I forget that?"

"Don't say that. You didn't even cause any financial loss to the company. I rather feel sorry that I let you go at that time just because you touched the company money. I was too harsh on you. Come and have a seat with me."

The president walked towards the conference table and sit there. Gun-Ho sat at the other side of the table so he could see and talk to the president face-to-face.

Gun-Ho looked at President Young-Sik Park closely. He seemed to lose more hair and gained a lot of wrinkles around his eyes. He was certainly a good looking man like a movie star, but he couldn't seem to help with aging.

"You seem to be doing very well, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. What do you do these days

for a living?"

"I do a rental property business. I do have OneRoomTels."

"Hmm, a OneRoomTel business must cost a lot to start. You must have saved a lot of money."

"I did make some money in China."

"What did you do in China?"

"I ran a restaurant there, and I made some money by selling a condo I had bought there."

"I see. That's nice."

Gun-Ho didn't mention about stocks, the real property he purchased at the auction, and the investment in the joint venture with China.

"I was told that you know someone in the hard money business."

"I think it wouldn't be easy to borrow money from them. They usually require strong collateral to lend money."

"I thought so."

"So, I was thinking that since I have money saved up to acquire another OneRoomTel, you could borrow that money from me."

"From you? Personally? I see that you are trying to help me, but I don't have any property I can offer you as collateral. All the properties I have are already being used by a non-bank financial institution to borrow money."

"I am aware of the situation. The money I would lend you wouldn't solve the problem you have."

"Then why do you want to lend me the money?"

"I just want to be of help to you since you had been generous to me."

"You are silly."

Gun-Ho pulled out an envelope from his pocket.

"What is this?"

"It's 200 million won."

"Are you serious about this? This is the amount with which you could purchase a condo in Asan City."

"I know that."

"Hmm."

The president closed his eyes for a moment and then said,

"All the real properties are already secured with other loans so I won't be able to use it as collateral for the money you are lending me. Instead, I will write a statement that I would transfer all the equipment in the factory to you for the money. They are old equipment but they are still worth the amount you are lending me."

"Well, if that's what you want, I am fine with it."

"I can't pay you high interest for the loan though. I will give you 7%."

"Do what you want to do, sir."

"Thank you, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. You are saving me big time."

The president grabbed Gun-Ho's hands.

"I have a question to ask you, sir."

"Okay."

"Will Mulpasaneop start the court receivership?"

"They actually want to start it but they need money to apply for it. I heard the Small and Medium Business Promotion Center is helping them to start the court receivership now."

"Since there is no court in Asan City, the court of Cheonan District Court will handle the court receivership?"

"No, the court receivership can only be handled by a higher court, so Daejeon District Court will take the case, I suppose."

"Oh, I see."

"What happened to the Mulpasaneop, by the way? I heard the president's son excessively invested in the company in China."

"His son invested about 10 billion won in the factory located in Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province."

"Huh? Did you say Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province?"

Suzhou City was very close to Kunshan City where Gun-Ho's joint venture was located. Suzhou City was a huge city compared to Kunshan City.

"That's right. His son spent way too much money in that factory and caused Mulpasaneop's financial crisis. Besides, that factory didn't do well; it couldn't sell enough products and it produced so many defective products. That made the situation even worse. It eventually resulted in family discord between the president and his son."

Gun-Ho decided to keep an eye on Mulpasaneop quietly.

123 Requital 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho lent 200 million won to President Park of YS Tech.

President Park deeply appreciated Gun-Ho's help.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. You are lending me the money with a bank interest. I do really appreciate it."

"I am sorry that I couldn't get you a better deal for this."

"Don't say that. This is the best offer I could receive. I'm sure that my employees will be very happy. Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, I feel much happier when I see my employees being pleased rather than when my personal assets increase."

"I do respect you, sir, with your noble mindset."

"Thank you. Oh, give me your bank account number where I can send the loan interest."

"This is a copy of my bank account. You can use this account to pay the monthly interest."

"Here is my statement saying I transfer you all of my factory equipment if I can't pay you back."

Even though Gun-Ho lent his money to the president of YS Tech, he knew the company's business wouldn't get better.

"YS Tech won't be able to survive without Mulpasaneop. If Mulpasaneop doesn't stabilize its business and financial situation, YS Tech will continuously suffer, and I won't get repaid for the money by them."

Gun-Ho thought about the value of the YS Tech factory equipment in case the president couldn't pay him back.

"It's not going to be even 20 million won. However, I feel like the burden was being lifted off my shoulders. I sort of paid off the generosity the president gave

me years ago."

Gun-Ho felt good, and he hummed while driving back to Seoul.

Gun-Ho noticed that many shares of Kumho Chemical started appearing on the market for sale.

"Hmm, they started moving."

The stock manipulators put some of their stocks on the market for sale and the price of stock began to fluctuate.

"F*ckers! Why don't they leave it alone?"

Gun-Ho joined the movement and put his stocks worth of 3 billion won on the market for sale. The price of the stock started going down. The little investors were clamoring.

"Why is the f*cking company not doing anything about it? Are they not monitoring their stock?"

"I will go to their next board meeting and make a complaint!"

The little investors were having a heated discussion about the stock in the online stock discussion website.

The next day, the manipulators continued to sell their stocks.

"I guess these manipulators don't have enough fund to wait anymore. Once the price became double, they started selling their stocks. They should have kept them until the price went up more."

Gun-Ho sold his 5 billion won worth of the stock, and the price went down even more.

The little people clamored fiercely.

"What's the bottom of this?"

"Is the company on fire? What's going on? How come does the stock price go down rapidly?"

Once the price of the stock went up a little bit, many little investors decided to sell the stocks bearing the loss.

Gun-Ho kept monitoring the stock.

"As soon as the stock market opened, people started selling the stocks. Okay, then I'm selling mine too."

Gun-Ho put his stock worth of 3 billion won on the market. The price of the stock went down steeply. The little investors panicked. The representative of the Kumho Chemical was having a hard time explaining the situation.

"Nothing special is going on with the company. The stock price fluctuation is just a temporary situation due to the demand and supply."

Gun-Ho felt sorry for the little investors, but he sold all of his stocks of Kumho Chemical that day. He participated in the stock manipulators' work.

Most of the little investors sold their stocks in fear even though they had to bear the loss.

Gun-Ho opened his stock account.

"The estimated value of the stock was 30 billion won, and I actually made only 28 billion won by selling the stock because I participated in selling the stocks even when the price was going down."

Gun-Ho lost 2 billion won but it was okay because he was going to buy the same stock again at a lower price. Once Gun-Ho started buying the stock after the stock price went down low enough, the manipulator began to buy the stock as well. The trading volume indicated the fact.

Once Gun-Ho purchased back the stock worth of 28 billion won, the price of the stock increased. An article in an economic newspaper talked about it.

[After the steep price drop of the Kumho Chemical stock, the price of the stock went up again and stabilized. The company was doing well and its international sales have been growing. The world petrochemical industry is optimistic.]

After the positive news articles on Kumho Chemical, Gun-Ho's estimated value

of the stock became 30 billion won again. However, since he purchased the shares at a lower price, the number of shares he owned now was higher than before.

"The price of this stock will stay about the same for a while. The remaining little investors will gradually sell their stocks. Their average price per share of the stock is higher than mine."

Gun-Ho closed the stock trading website.

"All I need to do now is to wait. The price won't change much for at least several months from now. The people who purchased the stock on credit or with a loan will have to sell their stock sooner or later even though they would lose money by doing so. Money always takes the rich's side."

Gun-Ho received a text message from Attorney Young-Sik Kim at Kim he wanted Gun-Ho to call him.

"It's about lunchtime. I guess it is a good time to talk with him."

Attorney Kim's phone rang and he answered the phone.

"Hey, it's me."

"What's up?"

"Do you remember Richard from Lymondell Dyeon, who you met last time? He is visiting Korea soon."

"Does he want to have a drink again?"

"No. This time he is visiting an automobile parts manufacturing company in Pyeongtaek City."

"Really?"

"It seems that he is coming to visit that company to discuss the possibility of establishing a factory for Lymondell Dyeon."

"I hope it goes well."

"He actually wants you to come with him when he visits that company."

"Me? Why? I have nothing to do with automobile parts stuff. I am doing a rental property business."

"He likes the fact that you used to work at a plastic factory as a mechanic."

"Haha. I was just a factory worker. Why is he interested in my humble factory experience? He would be able to meet with lots of engineers with Ph.D. in that company's research center."

"Richard has good eyes in recognizing the right people. Why don't you join him? You will learn a lot of new stuff."

"I can accompany him, of course; it is no problem at all. However, I'm afraid that I might not be of any help to him."

"What about next Wednesday?"

"Okay, Wednesday sounds good."

"By the way, aren't you going to the golf field yet? You have been practicing golf for a year now."

"Sure. I guess it is about the time. I will purchase a golf membership for the field."

"A golf membership? That is very expensive. The price of the membership is in the range from several tens of millions to several hundreds of millions of won. I use the business membership of Kim&Jeong whenever I need to go to the field."

"Is that so?"

"Let's have a round of golf with my law firm's membership when President Amiel comes to Korea."

"I don't want to impose."

"Don't worry about it. Amiel is a bad golf player. You can purchase your own golf membership later."

"Okay then. Let's do that."

124 Global Enterprise Lymondell

Dyeon 1 – PART 1

Wednesday came around.

Gun-Ho went to Palace Hotel that was located next to Gangnam Express Bus Terminal, where Amiel was staying for his visit to Korea. Attorney Young-Jin Kim was already in the hotel lobby when Gun-Ho arrived at the hotel.

"We don't have to take two cars. I will drive."

"Sounds good."

"Where is Amiel?"

"He will come down soon."

"What was the company name in Pyeongtaek City, where we are heading to?"

"It's Egnopak. Have you heard of it?"

"I have. It's quite a big company and a KOSDAQ registered firm."

"They have 3,000 employees."

"Yeah, that's about right."

Amiel came down to the first floor through an elevator and lifted his arm when he saw Gun-Ho waiting for him in the lobby.

"Oh, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, how are you?!"

Gun-Ho took President Amiel and Attorney Young-Jin Kim in his Land Rover and drove to Egnopak Corporation that was situated in Jinwi Town in Pyeongtaek City.

A guard stopped Gun-Ho's car at the main gate.

"We are here to meet the president."

"May I tell him who's here to see him?"

"Please tell him that the president of Japan location of Lymondell Dyeon is here."

The guard quickly made a call to somewhere before he came back to Gun-Ho's party.

"You can proceed. Please park over there and go to the second floor through the main entrance."

Their large factory was very well organized and extremely clean. The workers seemed to be neat and well disciplined. The front yard of the factory was nicely landscaped with trees such as pine trees and juniper trees.

"I want to have a factory like this! A factory that has over 3,000 employees with the sales revenue of one trillion won."

Gun-Ho bit his lips as he firmly made up his mind.

After Gun-Ho parked his car, the three men walked towards the main entrance. There was a man who looked like in his 50s waiting for Gun-Ho's party.

"Welcome to Egnopak. I am the director of the sales department here. You must be President Amiel. We received a call that you would be here. Please come with me; I will show you to the president's office."

At the entrance, several complete automobile parts were displayed under a spotlight. They were professionally displayed for showcasing.

The sales director led Gun-Ho's party to the second floor. The president's office was spacious. It was carpeted green, and a young lady who looked like in her 20s was sitting at a desk. She was wearing a suit. She must be a secretary. When she saw Gun-Ho's party entering the office, she stood up.

"Are you Mr. Amiel by any chance?"

The secretary asked; her English sounded perfect.

"Yes, I am."

The secretary brought Gun-Ho's party to another office inside a large office where they were standing.

The office was large. The president was sitting at a conference table that was situated in the middle of the office. He stood up when he saw Gun-Ho's party entering the office. The president was an overweight man in his 60s; he looked like a toad.

"Welcome, President Amiel."

Amiel pleasantly extended his hand to the president for a handshake.

"Let's all have a seat."

Once everyone was seated, the president took out his business card from a Korean traditional mother-of-pearl mini storage box and handed one to each of Gun-Ho's party. President Amiel gave his business card to the president and so did Attorney Kim. The president looked at Attorney Kim's business card closely with his reading glasses.

"Oh, you are an attorney from Kim&Jeong. But we don't need any legal consultation yet since we haven't started anything."

The president said to Attorney Kim while smiling. He had a large round face like a wheel of a vehicle with small eyes.

"I am here to interpret for President Amiel."

Gun-Ho pulled out his business card as well, but he hesitated to give it to the president; he felt somewhat embarrassed to hand it to him. However, he was here and felt compelled to give it to him. The president once again wore his reading glasses to look at Gun-Ho's business card.

"President of GH Development?"

"Yes, I am."

"What does GH stand for?"

Gun-Ho didn't know what to say. He felt embarrassed to tell him that GH was his initials. When the president noticed that Gun-Ho was hesitating to respond, he laughed and said,

"They must be your name initials. Many people use their initials for their company names these days. Is it a real estate development company?"

"I mostly do rental property business rather than developing."

The president didn't wait until Gun-Ho finished his sentence, but he started talking to Amiel.

"I was amazed when I went to the U.S. last month to see Lymondell Dyeon. I was very impressed by their research center and equipment. It was indeed a global enterprise."

Attorney Kim interpreted for Amiel as the president was talking. Once Amiel understood what the president said, he smiled broadly.

"I had a chance to glance at Egnopak on the way here. I was impressed as well. The factory seemed to be extremely clean."

Attorney Kim interpreted what Amiel just said.

"Our factory complies with 3 Right 5 S. I guess the workers were doing well since you found our factory extremely clean."

Attorney Kim whispered to Gun-Ho,

"President Goo, what is 3 Right 5 S?"

"It's a clean-up activity to enhance productivity efficiently in a factory. 3 Right stands for Right Goods, Right Quantity, and Right Place and 5 S stands for Sorting, Straightening, Shining, Standardizing, and Sustaining. I used to do it when I worked at a factory."

"Really? I see."

The female secretary brought tea and placed a cup of tea in front of each person in the office. Gun-Ho could smell the scent of tea.

"Let's have some tea. Why don't you join us, Ms. Oh?"

The secretary hesitated a bit before she sat at the edge of the table.

"Ms. Oh went to high school and college in the U.S. She speaks English very well. She will be helpful in communicating with President Amiel."

"Oh, really?"

Attorney Kim gave his business card to Ms. Oh. She looked at Attorney Kim's business card. Gun-Ho didn't give his to her.

After having a few sips of tea, the president continued to talk.

"It won't be easy for the joint venture of Lymondell Dyeon with Japan to get into the Chinese market. There is an emotional issue between Japan and China due to their history, and also labor cost in Japan is too high. However, if you can have a joint venture with Korea, then it will be much easier to enter the Chinese market. Ms. Oh, why don't you interpret for President Amiel?"

The secretary fluently interpreted what the president just said with her pleasant voice. Amiel and Attorney Kim seemed to be impressed.

"She spoke just like a native American."

Attorney Kim said in amazement.

Amiel said,

"We acknowledged the advanced technology of Egnopak. The reason we don't do joint venture with China is because of their technology that is behind Japan and Korea. Moreover, it's hard to find good quality compound pigment in a market in China."

This time, Attorney Kim interpreted for the president.

The president continued to talk. He seemed to be very experienced in this sort of discussion.

"We will prepare the land to build a factory and an extruder for compounds

machine. All Lymondell Dyeon needs to bring in is their technology. We will also handle the marketing for the Chinese market; we already have our branch office in China. So, I want to suggest,"

The president dragged his chair towards Amiel and said in a low tone,

"Let's make it 51:49. We are 51 and Lymondell Dyeon takes 49. We need this to maintain our management control. Also, we want the technology transfer at the end of the joint venture."

Amiel was listening intently to what the president said, and then he smiled and said,

"I understood what you said. However, I am not in a position to discuss the joint venture's terms. I will talk with the headquarters. It has been a very productive meeting, sir."

125 Global Enterprise Lymondell

Dyeon 1 – PART 2

The president of Egnopak called for the sales director.

"Why don't you show President Amiel of Japan where Lymondell Dyeon is located around our factory, including our research center and production line before they leave?"

"Of course, I will do that."

Gun-Ho's party visited Egnopak's research center. The chief research officer came out and greeted Gun-Ho's party; he was wearing a white lab coat.

"Our research center has more than 100 researchers with a Ph.D. in Engineering."

Gun-Ho was astonished by the company's high-end research equipment and its great number of highly educated employees.

"What I have is nothing compared to this company. I have only a few OneRoomTels and some stocks."

Gun-Ho felt a bit depressed. The face of the Egnopak's president who looked like a toad and who had a company with sales revenue of over a trillion won kept popping up in his head.

As Attorney Young-Jin Kim suggested, Gun-Ho and Amiel decided to go to the golf field altogether.

"Since this is your first time in the field, we will accompany you to the field, and in return, you need to buy us a drink."

"I will do that with pleasure!"

"By the way, are you okay with playing golf during your work hours? It's a weekday."

"I'm working right now. This is part of my job."

"I see. Something related to Lymondell Dyeon?"

"Right. Once the multinational corporation—Lymondell Dyeon successfully starts a joint venture with a Korean firm, our law firm will get paid."

"Oh, I see. Okay, then I will join your business today."

"And you go to the field for the first time with us today."

Attorney Kim insisted that they would have to have an 18 hole round of golf instead of 36 hole round because 36 hole round would be too much for a beginner like Gun-Ho. So they headed to Pine Creek Country Club that was located in Anseong City because it had an 18-hole public golf course. The weather was sunny and bright that day.

"This is so nice."

Gun-Ho felt good being in a large green golf course.

"Wonderful."

Amiel seemed to like it too.

"Okay, Gun-Ho. Hit the ball!"

Gun-Ho felt nervous. He grabbed a 1-wood and postured to address the ball, and he hit the ball. Gun-Ho's ball became unplayable. Gun-Ho felt sorry and embarrassed. He even blushed in embarrassment.

"I have no idea why I play golf. This is too difficult. Sh*t, I want to throw my driver and go home."

Gun-Ho was a mess in playing golf.

"At impact, do not lift your head. Put your weight on your left foot!"

Gun-Ho was getting better after the round's first half.

"You are doing good."

People around Gun-Ho clapped, and he felt encouraged.

"This might be fun."

Gun-Ho gradually gained confidence and had fun playing golf. He made less and less double bogey or triple bogey.

"Hmm, now I see why people play golf!"

Gun-Ho played golf that day following Attorney Kim's instruction all the time, but he felt good.

"Congratulations, Gun-Ho. You are no longer a beginner in the field."

"I feel like I didn't play golf today, but you did for me."

After playing golf, Gun-Ho took Attorney Kim and Amiel to a restaurant in Pyeongtaek, which specialized in Galbi*. The name of the restaurant was Nonsense and they were using only Korean beef ribs.

"This is a very famous beef rib restaurant. Enjoy it."

Amiel loved the dish, and raised his thumb and kept saying "tastes good."

It was the day when Amiel was leaving Korea. Gun-Ho went to the Palace Hotel to say goodbye to him. Attorney Kim was already there when Gun-Ho arrived at the hotel. Gun-Ho quietly asked Attorney Kim,

"Do you think they will start a joint venture with Egnopak?"

"Negative. They both are sophisticated business experts. It seems that it won't be easy to reach an agreement with satisfying terms to both parties."

"Hmm, really?"

Amiel came to the lobby while dragging his luggage.

"I will see you soon."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to Amiel for a handshake.

"You know what? I am more interested in you, Gun-Ho, rather than the president of Egnopak."

"Me? Why? I don't have money or technology to do a joint venture."

"Well, I just like you a lot, like a friend."

"Haha. Thank you for saying that."

"Why don't you visit me in Japan with Attorney Kim. I know a good golf course there."

"Do Japanese people play golf a lot as well?"

"I often go to Yonehara Golf Club close to Tokyo where my company is located."

"I see."

"It takes about 50 minutes in a vehicle from Haneda Airport in Tokyo to get there. It's in Ichihara City, Chiba Prefecture. You don't even need a car to go there; you can use a shuttle bus. Come to Japan in the near future. I will show you around."

"Really? Okay, I will do that. You'd better go now. You don't want to miss your flight. Let's go."

Gun-Ho came back to his office after seeing Amiel leaving the country. He felt so sleepy. When he had a cup of coffee to try to stay awake, he received a call from Suk-Ho Lee who was running a bar in Gyeongridan Street.

"Hey, Suk-Ho. What's up?"

"Are you busy? Can we talk?"

"Sure, I'm good. How's your bar?"

"It's doing okay. I'm calling to let you know that I'm getting married next month."

"Wow, really? Congratulations, man. Where will you hold your wedding?"

"At the War Memorial of Korea in Yongsan Town."

"War Memorial of Korea? Do they have a wedding hall there?"

"Yes, it's big. So many couples are having their weddings in that location these days. It was hard to reserve an available date for ours."

"I will certainly be there. Congratulations again. I am envious of you, man. What's your bride doing for a living by the way?"

"She has her own business, a clothing store."

"That's nice. I'm so envious. I will tell Min-Hyeok in China about your wedding."

"Thanks. Oh, give me your home address. I want to send you my wedding invitation."

"You don't have to mail the wedding invitation. You can just text me."

"No, I want to do it in the right way. Give me your address, man."

Gun-Ho couldn't remember his home address so he pulled out his resident registration card to see his own address.

"TowerPalace, Eonju-ro 30-gil, Gangnam-gu, Seoul..."

Gun-Ho gave his address to Suk-Ho.

After getting off the phone with Suk-Ho, Gun-Ho called Min-Hyeok who was in China right away.

"Hey, Suk-Ho is getting married. He just called me."

"Really? So he is getting married before us. Jackas*."

"What's wrong? Something happened between you and him?"

"Do you know what he told me when I was studying for the government job exam during the gathering with our friends?"

"What did he say?"

"He said why it took so long for me to pass the exam. He was tapping my head while saying it, and he laughed at me. I so wanted to hit him."

"Haha, forget about it."

"He was so mean when we were in high school too. He used to tap my head whenever he felt like it in those days."

Gun-Ho wanted to tell Min-Hyeok about the incident when Suk-Ho took his umbrella in high school, but he didn't.

"Yeah, he can sometimes be mean. But, he is getting married now. Let's congratulate him. His wedding will be held on the 6th of next month at the War Memorial of Korea in Yongsan Town."

"Can you give him 50,000 won under my name? I will send the money to Ms. Jin-Young Jeong. I don't think I can attend his wedding."

"Haha. I will send congratulatory money as a business expense, so don't worry about sending me the money. I will take care of it."

"Thank you so much."

"Don't mention it. I'm letting you go now then. Talk to you soon."

Note *

Galbi — Korean grilled beef ribs.

126 Global Enterprise Lymondell

Dyeon 2 – PART 1

When Gun-Ho got off the phone with Min-Hyeok, he received another call from President Young-Sik Park of YS Tech.

"President Goo? It's me."

"Yes, sir."

"I just deposited the loan interest for the 200 million won that you lent me the other day to your bank account; it's 1,170,000 won. Because of the money, the company is still staying strong."

"That's really good to hear."

"You saved my company."

"Don't mention it, sir. Has Mulpasaneop applied for court receivership?"

"They are in the process of preparing for it. They already received funds from the Small and Medium Business Promotion Center, and they are preparing the application now."

"Do you happen to know the name of the accountant who has been handling Mulpasaneop's financial matter? If you have their financial statements, you can find the name of the accountant on it."

"Hold on one second. Let me check."

"Okay, sir."

President Young-Sik Park found the name of the accountant in the Mulpasaneop's financial statements and gave it to Gun-Ho.

"It's Accountant Nak-Jong Lee from Anchang Accountant Office."

"Got it. Thank you."

"Why do you want his name?"

"I know a hard money lender. He used to make a lot of money as a hard money lender in Myeong Town when he was young. I was thinking that there might be something I can do to help Mulpasaneop."

"Hmm, really? I see."

After getting off the phone with President Park from YS Tech, Gun-Ho thought of the accountant—Nak-Jong Lee."

"Nak-Jong Lee... I guess I will have to see him."

Gun-Ho collected information on Mulpasaneop such as financial statements from DART and the company's current state from a paid-website. He wanted to bring all this information to Chairman Lee of Cheongdam Town.

"I believe that Chairman Lee should have some valuable advice on what needs to be done. I feel like I always ask him to meet me only when I need something from him. I think I'd better get him a present or something this time."

Gun-Ho was at first thinking of getting expensive liquor and then he decided not to; Chairman Lee didn't often enjoy having a drink anyway.

"Then what should I get him? He has everything he needs. I just want to get him something to show him my appreciation."

After giving a lot of thought to it, a king-sized persimmon crossed his mind.

"I guess dried persimmons should be good. Considering his age, he would like the tenderness that a semi-dried persimmon offers."

Gun-Ho purchased a box of king-sized semi-dried persimmons from a department store and went to Chairman Lee's building in Cheongdam Town.

"The location of this building is excellent. When would I be able to buy a building in this kind of place?"

When Gun-Ho entered Chairman Lee's office, his secretary jumped up from her seat.

"Hi, is Chairman Lee in the office?"

"Yes, are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

Chairman Lee's secretary must have had a very good memory. She remembered Gun-Ho after she had seen him only once last time he visited here.

"Wow. She remembers my name!"

Gun-Ho thought he should have brought something for the secretary as well, like a sweet cake or something.

The secretary went inside Chairman Lee's office and let him know that Gun-Ho was here.

"President Goo is here?! Let him in."

Gun-Ho entered Chairman Lee's office and gave him a 90-degree bow.

"How have you been, sir?"

"What made you come all the way here today?"

"I'm sorry. I should have come to see you more often."

"You must be very busy these days. I haven't seen you at the fishing site for a long while. What are you carrying?"

"Oh, I saw this dried king-size persimmon on the way here. It looked so delicious so I had to get them for you."

"Hand it over to me."

Chairman Lee opened the box that was wrapped with a golden wrapping cloth.

"They are semi-dried persimmon. They look tasty."

Chairman Lee tried one persimmon.

"It is tasty. The taste reminds me of my home town. Why don't you try one?"

"Thank you."

When Gun-Ho picked up one semi-dried persimmon, Chairman Lee called for the secretary.

"Ms. Park, Ms. Park!"

"Yes, sir."

The secretary entered the office hastily.

"Take some of these dried persimmons for yourself!"

"Oh, thank you, sir."

Chairman Lee looked at Gun-Ho's face closely after drinking a cup of water.

"How's your business? I can tell by looking at your face that it is going very well."

"Yes, it's doing fine."

"Well, the rental property business is usually stable. I've heard you are doing a joint venture with China. How is it?"

"That is doing okay as well."

"If a company is doing okay, that means it is successful."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho took some moment before bringing up the Mulpasaneop matter. Gun-Ho took out a big envelope with documents related to Mulpasaneop in it.

"What is that?"

"Actually I came to hear your advice on something."

"I won't do that."

"Sir?"

"You have never paid for my advice."

"Sir?"

"Haha, I'm just kidding. Since you brought me the dried persimmons, that should be my fee. So what do you want to know?"

"Well, there is a company named Mulpasaneop in Asan City. Please take a look at these documents. According to their balance sheet, their annual sales revenue was 70 billion won the year before last year. Since last year, it shrank to 50 billion won."

"Hmm."

"They used to have 400 employees, and now they have only about 250 workers. The company is in the process of preparing for the court receivership."

"Do you want to buy this company?"

"Yes. I used to work in a factory before. I really want to run a factory myself. My desire and hope to have a factory are like a religion to me."

"What is this 10 billion won foreign investment here?"

"The president's son opened a factory in China."

"Since that is not shown on the consolidated financial statements, that factory must have gone under."

"I suppose so."

"Why do you want to buy a company that is going broke?"

"I want to make it stable and run it successfully."

"I understand your desire since you used to work in a factory. Your desire must be different from the one of a person like me who used to work as a hard money lender."

"Do you think they will sell the company?"

"I don't know. However, they should be sick and tired of the company by now since they must have suffered enough with creditors."

"If someone wants to make an M&A of this company, how much would they ask?"

"I'm not sure since I am not the one who owns that company. However, if the president of the company has been running that company since he was young, the company must have meant so much to him like his own child. In that case, the president will resist selling his company until it eventually needs to be broken into pieces and sold. That's a different mindset from a person like me—a hard money lender."

"That means, he would want a high price for his company."

"If he decides to sell it, he would ask for the amount he could have a good retired life with."

"How much would that be?"

"How much do you think is needed to have a good retired life?"

"About 3 billion won?"

Chairman Lee didn't say anything.

"Then, 5 billion won?"

Chairman Lee still didn't say anything before he finally gave what he thought.

"That... I can't tell. You have to be in the situation to call a price."

"I think 5 billion won should be enough."

"How much do you have right now?"

Gun-Ho had about 30 billion won in stock, but he told Chairman Lee that he had about 10 billion won.

"I have about 10 billion won."

"So you have enough money to buy that company if it costs you 5 billion won."

"That's right."

Chairman Lee clicked his tongue.

127 Global Enterprise Lymondell

Dyeon 2 – PART 2

When he heard Chairman Lee clicking his tongue, Gun-Ho suddenly came to his senses.

"Let's say, you acquired that company for 5 billion won. Then what?"

"I believe I could gradually pay off the debt as I make money by running the company."

"Creditors have no mercy. They will fiercely come and attack you."

"That's possible. However, creditors are human as well. I guess maybe I can negotiate with them about the repayment plan."

"Creditors are greedy. Every single one of them will come to you to get his money first. All these account receivables in these financial statements are not true; you know that right? Since you had worked in an accounting department before."

"That's right, but..."

"This company's credit purchase and the payable amounts are over 50 billion won. They can't pay off the debt even after disposing of all of their assets. If you have 50 billion won, then go ahead and buy the company."

"Whew."

"Moreover, they could have hidden debt that didn't show on their financial statements."

"So, there could be unexpected debt that would be popping up anytime. I see."

"Exactly."

"If they sell the assets they invested in another country, that could be helpful,

right?"

"There is none. They invested 10 billion won in another country, but you should assume that there is nothing left there. The fund they invested must be the cost to build their factory there and to buy equipment. A piece of equipment that cost 100 million won at that time now costs almost nothing."

Gun-Ho realized that Chairman Lee pointed out all the concerns he was worried about himself.

"I know that you are worried about the same things. You just came here to confirm."

"Whew. That's right."

"So, what do you think? Did you get what you came for? Was your dried persimmon worth your money?"

"Haha, yes, more than enough. Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho laughed along with Chairman Lee.

Gun-Ho stood up from his seat and said goodbye to Chairman Lee. Chairman Lee gave Gun-Ho his last advice for the day,

"You can get the answer that you are looking for by carefully reviewing the types of creditors, characters of debt, and their lawsuit and the court judgment. If you want to catch a tiger, you have to get into its mouth."

"Thank you for the advice, sir."

Gun-Ho went down to the parking lot in Chairman Lee's building and started his car. While he was inside his car, he repeated to himself what he heard from Chairman Lee.

"I have to get into the tiger's mouth."

Tomorrow was Suk-Ho's wedding, who was running a bar at Gyeongridan Street.

Gun-Ho asked Ms. Ji-Young Jeong to prepare two congratulatory envelopes.

"Put 100,000 won in each envelope. Write my name on one of the envelopes, and the other one is for President Min-Hyeok Kim."

"Understood, sir. I will ask Manager Kang to write the names on the envelopes. He has beautiful handwriting. He will come back soon to the office after checking the OneRoomTel."

"Okay."

"Sir, if you received the wedding invitation, please give it to me. I will make a copy of it and give it back to you."

She needed to attach the copy of the wedding invitation to the business expense form in order to categorize it as a business expense.

"Okay. I have it at home. I will bring it to you tomorrow."

Gun-Ho thought of Won-Chul Jo's wedding that he attended years back.

'At that time, I was so worried about the wedding gift money for him. I guess I will see many high school classmates at Suk-Ho's wedding tomorrow. Won-Chul and Suk-Ho were popular in high school since they both had a middle-class family. They did better in school than me. Min-Hyeok and I were like invisible at that time. Min-Hyeok's father was a bus driver, and my father was a labor worker in a subcontracting company.'

Gun-Ho was thinking of sending a congratulatory flower wreath to Suk-Ho's wedding with his name on it.

'Do I want to send a congratulatory flower wreath to his wedding? What do I want to achieve by doing it?'

Well, Gun-Ho decided to send it anyway. His friends probably already heard that Gun-Ho was making a lot of money, by now. If he gave only 100,000 won for Suk-Ho's wedding, his friends would think he was cheap. In addition, Suk-Ho might not get a lot of flower wreaths because he hadn't really worked in a company or belonged to some kind of group, but he had rather been self-employed all these years.

Gun-Ho called for Ms. Ji-Young Jeong again.

"Do we have a flower shop we usually use on occasion?"

"Yes, we do."

"Can you send two congratulatory wedding flower wreaths to the wedding?"

"What name should I place on the wreaths?"

"One is for President Gun-Ho Goo from GH Development, and the other one is for President Min-Hyeok Kim from Jinxi Industrial Park in China."

"I'm sorry, sir. Jinxi what?"

Ms. Ji-Young Jeong couldn't catch everything that Gun-Ho just told her. So Gun-Ho wrote the exact names down on a piece of paper and gave it to Ji-Young.

"Here we go."

"Got it, sir."

The next day, Gun-Ho went to a beauty salon to get his hair done, and he wore new clothes as well.

"Wow, sir. You look like a groom."

Gun-Ho laughed.

"This tie here is the one that Manager Kang bought for me from China."

"It looks good on you. It looks expensive."

There were a lot of people at Suk-Ho's wedding. Some of them changed a lot over the years and Gun-Ho couldn't even recognize them.

"Gun-Ho? Good to see you, man. I heard you are running your own business. Give me your business card."

"Hey, Gun-Ho? You look great. I smell rich from you."

After chatting with several friends from high school, Gun-Ho went to the groom.

"Congratulations."

"Thank you. I saw the flower wreath you sent to me. Oh, this is my mom."

Suk-Ho introduced his mom to Gun-Ho.

"Mom, this is my friend, Gun-Ho."

"Oh, this is the guy who is running a big company. Thank you for coming."

Gun-Ho looked around the wedding hall. There were four flower wreaths; two of them were from Gun-Ho. His flower wreaths were standing confidently with his and Min-Hyeok's name on them.

Gun-Ho's classmates from high school approached him again.

"Gun-Ho, I heard Min-Hyeok is working with you."

"Yeah, he is working in China for the joint venture."

They looked at the flower wreath that has Min-Hyeok's name on it.

"President Min-Hyeok from Jinxi Industrial Park? Is he a president?"

"That's right. He is the president of our joint venture. He is having a hard time there now since the company just started."

"Really? Hey, do you need anything from my company?"

"Haha, my company is a rental property business."

"Can I stop by your office sometime?"

"Haha, you could but I usually don't stay in the office, and it is a small company with only two employees. You will have a hard time finding a place to sit there."

Won-Chul Jo who was working at a big company came to Gun-Ho and asked for his business card. Won-Chul handed his business card to Gun-Ho as well. Won-Chul was now a manager.

"Wow, you are a manager now. Congratulations."

"You are making good money these days, huh?"

"Working in a big company is better. They pay you a high salary there. Running a company is not easy at all."

"Let's get together more often."

Gun-Ho thought that things changed a lot. Won-Chul used to treat Gun-Ho like an invisible man, and now he was suggesting meeting Gun-Ho more often.

"I'm living in Mok Town right now. Where do you live?"

"I'm living in Dogok Town in Gangnam District."

"Do they have an office-tel there?"

"I purchased a condo there."

"Which one?"

"TowerPalace."

"Really?"

Won-Chul looked sulky at that moment.

128 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 1 – PART 1

Byung-Tae Hwang who graduated from KAIST came to Suk-Ho's wedding as well. He was ranked number one in the class in high school, and he was known as a genius at that time.

"I heard you are working in Pangyo. Which research facility are you working for?"

Byung-Tae who was wearing thick glasses handed his business card to Gun-Ho instead of answering Gun-Ho's question. His business card said he was a senior researcher in some research center and he had a Ph.D. in engineering.

"You must be living in Pangyo as well then."

"No, I live in Suji."

"You haven't married yet, have you?"

"I will next year. I have a fiancée."

"Really? I will be at your wedding."

"Thank you. I will let you know once I know the exact date and place for my wedding."

"Hello? Bro? I'm here too."

Gun-Ho turned his head around to see a person who just talked. It was Jong-Suk.

"Hey, Jong-Suk. How come you are here? Oh, that's right. You are close to Suk-Ho as well."

"I used to be way closer to you than Suk-Ho bro. You just became distant lately."

"No, I didn't. Hey, you look great in a suit. You look even handsome. You can

marry too."

"We need to marry in order of age. You have to get married first."

Gun-Ho was thinking.

'If I still worked in a factory in Pocheon or Yangju, would I have come here for Suk-Ho's wedding and talked with old friends with confidence?'

It had been a week since Suk-Ho's wedding and Gun-Ho received a call from Suk-Ho.

"Hey, Gun-Ho. I'm just calling to thank you. You have been very helpful at my wedding."

"I haven't done much. How's your honeymoon trip?"

"It was good."

"Where are you settling in?"

"I purchased an 18 pyung townhouse in Bogwang Town. My parents helped me to buy it."

"Really? Bogwang Town is close to Gyeongridan Street where your bar is, which is nice."

"Oh, I talked with several friends from high school and we decided to have some gathering."

"Really?"

"I will let you know once the date is fixed. Won-Chul actually suggested having a gathering at my wedding day."

"Sounds good. Just let me know."

The board meeting of the joint venture came close. At the board meeting, board members and management officers discuss important policies and matters of the company and also appoint executive officers including CEO.

Gun-Ho left for China to attend the board meeting of his joint venture.

The president of the joint venture—Min-Hyeok Kim was at the airport to pick up Gun-Ho. He came in his Audi with his chauffeur. The joint venture insisted that Min-Hyeok must have a chauffeur because he was a foreigner.

"At the board meeting, the president of Jinxi Construction Company—Chinkkweo Seon and the vice president of the joint venture—Kkangsin Kkao will be there."

"In addition to those two, there will be a secretary who will take board meeting minutes during the meeting."

"I see. There will be five people then, including us."

"Oh, there will be another person—an interpreter. So, six people will attend the meeting."

"Oh, Suk-Ho from Gyeongridan Street called me."

"What did he say?"

"He wanted to thank me for sending him the flower wreath and gift money."

"Really? He could sometimes be mean but he will probably pay you back if you do good to him."

Gun-Ho was amazed when he saw the Jinxi Industrial Park.

"Wow, it looks majestic!"

"They are not done yet. They are still building more factories. Seven companies stopped by the industrial park when they noticed the park from the road and made a contract with us. They are all Korean companies."

"That's right. I read it from the weekly report you had sent to me."

"They are building factories so fast, right?"

"Yes, they indeed are, and they are very skillful too."

"Yeah, of course, they are. They are the ones who built the Great Wall of China, several thousand years ago."

The president of Jinxi Construction Company—Chinkkweo Seon conducted the board meeting as the chairman of the board for the joint venture. He started the meeting.

"We are now starting our first boarding meeting of the Korean Chinese joint venture—Jinxi Industrial Park."

Everyone at the meeting looked at the chairman.

"The Korean co-venturer, President Gun-Ho Goo from GH Development is here with us today. And this is President Min-Hyeok Kim of our joint venture."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok stood up from their seats and bowed respectively.

"For the Chinese co-venturer, I, myself, Chinkkweo Seon and Kkangsin Kkao are present."

Chinkkweo Seon and Kkangsin Kkao bowed.

In front of each board member and officer, a ceramic cup of tea, that was decorated with a dragon figure, was placed. The secretary walked around the table with a pot and filled up each cup with hot tea.

"Next, the vice president of the joint venture— Kkangsin Kkao will present the report."

Kkangsin Kkao started his presentation with a report that he prepared.

"Since we opened our joint venture, we have made 5,200,000 Yuan from deposits that were received by the companies who decided to move into our industrial park. We incurred 8,400,000 Yuan to construct factories so far, and additional 1,200,000 Yuan was spent for other expenses."

Listening to the report was a bit boring.

Gun-Ho asked a question.

"So, how much is left after spending all the expenses so far?"

"We have currently 3,500,000 Yuan."

The president of Jinxi Construction Company— Chinkkweo Seon added to Kkangsin Kkao's response.

"Umm, we started receiving rents from seven companies that already settled in the industrial park since last month. From that time, we haven't used our joint venture's fund any longer."

Gun-Ho anticipated that once the industrial park was fully filled with companies, the joint venture's fund would increase substantially.

"Since this is a rental business as well, as Professor Jien Wang stated, it is a Cash Cow business (Cash Cow: a profitable business that generates a steady flow of income as if milking a cow.)"

Kkangsin Kkao continued his presentation of the report.

"We will continuously put our untiring effort to be productive and efficient."

There was nothing special or important after Kkangsin Kkao's report, but it took unexpectedly a lot of time because of the process of interpreting. The meeting started at 10 am and it was still on, even at noon.

At the end of the meeting, Gun-Ho made a proposal to raise Min-Hyeok's salary to 6,000 Yuan.

The Chinese co-venturer opposed.

"I object."

"What is your reason to oppose?"

The Chinese co-venturer stated that once they raised the president's salary, they would have to raise all other employee's salary as well.

"If we raise everyone's salary, then the payability will be weakened."

Min-Hyeok talked to Gun-Ho in a low voice,

"You don't have to do this. I am okay. Let's try this later after we observe how the company develops."

Gun-Ho then suggested raising the president's salary according to the business performance.

"We consent to it."

The Chinese co-venturer stated they all agreed with Gun-Ho's last suggestion.

Gun-Ho thought those Chinese people who previously had worked for Jinxi Construction Company were not quick but practical.

"They are somewhat reasonable, maybe because they used to work for a government-owned company."

The board meeting was over after 12:30 pm.

"Good work everyone. Let's have lunch somewhere really nice."

The board members and officers went to a restaurant called Jujangchangwan.

The president of Jinxi Construction Company— Chinkkweo Seon had Gun-Ho sit at the head of the table in the restaurant.

"You are the chairman of the board, so you are the one who has to sit here."

"Don't say that. You will be the next chairman of the board, and you came all the way here from Korea. You are our special guest."

After spending some time in suggesting each other sitting at the head of the table, Gun-Ho finally sits there.

They ordered a lot of food and Chinese liquor, Baiju.

"Let's drink for the company."

When they clinked their first glasses of Baiju to each other's, the president of Jinxi Construction Company received a call.

"President Goo, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li is on his way here. Let's eat slowly."

"Really? Deputy Mayor is coming?"

When they finished about half of the food they ordered, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li arrived at the restaurant with his chauffeur.

"Hey, President Goo. Good to see you!"

"Good to see you, Seukang Li. You didn't have to come; we understand that you must be very busy in the city hall."

"I intended to join you earlier, but the meeting took more time than I expected. I came here as soon as the meeting was over."

"Have a seat here."

"Nah. You should stay at the head of the table."

When Gun-Ho and Seukang Li asked each other to sit at the head of the table, the president of Jinxi Construction Company yielded his seat to them.

129 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 1 – PART 2

In a luxurious restaurant in China, round tables are usually placed in the restaurant, and the head of this round table is the seat that is facing the entrance door.

"This is your seat, Gun-Ho. You sit here."

Seukang Li pressed Gun-Ho's shoulder down to the seat, and Gun-Ho was lightly forced to sit at the head of the table again.

"You must be thirsty, Seukang Li after hastily running to the restaurant to join us; drink this liquor. Mr. Chauffeur, have this coke; it will ease your thirst."

The chauffeur laughed while sitting at the lowest seat; he was still wearing his black sunglasses just like the last time Gun-Ho saw him. Seukang Li continued to talk while drinking a cup of tea instead of liquor.

"How was the board meeting? Did you get the report?"

"Yes, it was very good. I am satisfied."

"That's good. As a matter of fact, it cost us a lot to complete the 3-Flow work in the beginning. "

"I can see that. During the SOC (Social Overhead Capital) creation, it is expected to incur significant cost. How much did it cost your government for the industrial park?"

"I can't tell you the amount since it is the expense that the government has to bear, but just know that it did cost us a lot. Our goal is to create more jobs for the city by building the industrial park and invite more businesses."

"You are a very good government official; I can tell you that. Hey, President Min-Hyeok Kim, don't you agree?"

"I absolutely agree with you. I've met with a lot of Chinese government officials since I came to China, and I am impressed by their sheer effort to enhance their people's life."

"President Goo, let's drink. Confucius once said, 'don't you feel delighted when you have a friend from far away.' That's exactly what I feel."

Seukang Li then grabbed Gun-Ho's hand.

"My friend, I truly thank you. Usually, if we start a joint venture with a Korean company, the Korean company would demand a lot of things and they would intervene in our management. However, your GH Development doesn't do that. I do recognize your trust and appreciate it."

"Don't mention it. You just take care of President Min-Hyeok Kim for me, who is out here alone working for the joint venture."

"President Min-Hyeok Kim is doing very well here; I can tell you that. Don't worry about him."

While he was saying that, Seukang Li clinked his glass of liquor to Min-Hyeok's.

They continued to drink.

"President Goo, my industrial park project has been highly praised within the government. I think I will possibly be promoted and be able to move back to Shanghai."

"Really? That's great."

"It hasn't been confirmed yet. However, once the industrial park is fully occupied with companies, and it creates more jobs that leads a rise in the employment rate, most likely, I will be able to move back to Shanghai."

"You have all your family in Shanghai, right?"

"Yes, I want to move back in with my wife and kids in Shanghai. However, I do love Kunshan City as well. They have so many beautiful things to offer including—natural environment. My wife is currently working as an official at the customs in Shanghai; if not for her job, I would really want to settle down in

Kunshan City with my family. The people here are very nice as well."

Everyone that day drank a lot including Seukang Li and Gun-Ho. The people from Jinxi Construction Company and Min-Hyeok enjoyed drinking as well.

After having a nice dinner and drink, Gun-Ho's party walked out of the restaurant. Gun-Ho wanted to sober up, so he asked Min-Hyeok to go to the canal with him.

"Why don't we go to a lake instead? The canal is not very clean."

"Either one is fine with me. Let's go to the lake then."

Min-Hyeok asked his chauffeur to drive to Yangcheng Lake.

The water of the Yangcheng Lake looked very clean blue.

The light breeze on the lake was shaking reeds.

"This is so nice. I like the lake in China. It is way bigger than a lake in Korea. Min-Hyeok, let's get off the car and take a walk."

"Sounds good."

"I guess there should be a huge poi living in this lake, and it must be tall about our height."

"China has enormously huge land and lakes; I like it. However, the weather could be nasty."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok walked along the lake while enjoying the nice breeze from the lake without saying anything. After a while, Gun-Ho grabbed Min-Hyeok's hand.

"Min-Hyeok, I know you are having a hard time here by yourself."

"No, it's okay. I work as a president here because of you, and people respect me."

"How's your learning the Chinese language going?"

"It doesn't improve as fast as I want it to. I study with the interpreter—Eun-Hwa

Jo every day, but I guess it will take time."

"You don't have any problem going to a restaurant or buying food by yourself, right?"

"Yeah, I can do that. I actually took the Chinese Proficiency Test—HSK last time as Eun-Hwa Jo suggested, and I passed the level 4."

"Oh, really? Why didn't you tell me that earlier?"

"I wanted to pass the level 6 before telling you. Level 4 is not high enough to show off."

"Level 4 is high enough; you should be proud of yourself, given the fact that you haven't been in China for not that long."

Gun-Ho held Min-Hyeok's hand tightly.

"I sometimes feel so sorry to you that maybe I shouldn't have sent you to China. Let's endure for some more time. We will see a bright day someday."

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. I'm not sure if I can be of help here. I just don't impose."

"Min-Hyeok, I absolutely need you. You, the son of a bus driver, and I, the son of a manual labor worker, we both were born to a poor family. And we both have been through a lot. Moreover, you had worked in a quality assurance department. So, I was thinking you were the perfect person for the position that you are in right now."

"I am still not sure if I am good enough for the position."

"Min-Hyeok, you will be actually doing way bigger work in the near future with me. Even though you are currently managing the rental business in this industrial park, you and I will move forward and work in a bigger world."

"Do you think I can handle it?"

"Min-Hyeok, my dream is to own a manufacturing company. I don't have money and I am not very smart, so, I don't think I can compete with smart or talented people in the IT field or in the entertainment business. However, I want to have a

gigantic manufacturing company."

"I see. That's your dream."

"And I want to have the same-sized factory in China too. So I do absolutely need you."

Min-Hyeok quietly let go of Gun-Ho's hand and looked at his face closely.

"Gun-Ho, my friend, I do admire you. I don't understand how you made that much money and started your own company at your age. Our friends told me that you made money in a real estate investment in China, but that doesn't make sense to me either. In order to invest in real estate, you need seed money in the first place. Well, I think you are great and I admire you."

Gun-Ho recoiled when Min-Hyeok mentioned about the seed money, and wanted to tell him that,

'My friend, Min-Hyeok, I made my seed money in a way that I am not proud of. Min-Hyeok, since you are in China, you might want to invest in real estate as well just like I did; however, the difference between you and me is that you don't have seed money to start with. The gap between the rich and the poor starts with the existence of the seed money. In this harsh reality, that seed money I made, as a person who was born to a poor family, is soaked with my bloody tears. Min-Hyeok who has a pure and clean heart just like the water of Yangcheng, don't follow in my footsteps.'

130 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho's face hardened for a second and then he smiled.

"Min-Hyeok, it just happened that way."

"No, you are different from us, Gun-Ho. You are becoming a legend among our friends."

"Let's take a picture together. There is a student riding a bike over there. Let's ask him to take a picture of us."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok posed for a picture while putting arms around each other's shoulders. The Yangcheng Lake appeared in the background of the picture.

Gun-Ho was going to return to Korea right after the board meeting, but then he decided to meet Professor Jien Wang before leaving China. He wanted to see his friend and have a drink with him. He made a call to Professor Wang.

"Gun-Ho? Are you in China? Where are you? Are you in Kunshan City?"

"Yeah, I came to Kunshan City to attend the board meeting. I just wanted to see you before going back to Korea. I'm thinking of going to Zhejiang University in Hangzhou City to see you."

"Really? Come! I want to see you, friend."

Gun-Ho headed to the express bus terminal in Shanghai to take a bus to Hangzhou City. Min-Hyeok came along with Gun-Ho to see him off.

"I'm sorry, Min-Hyeok. I really wanted to get the approval to raise your salary at the board meeting."

"Don't worry about it. 5,000 Yuan I'm receiving now here is enough for me. I can't get a raise without other employees getting their raise too."

"Take this. You probably need this. As you work in a position as a president, you will face an unexpected situation where you need to spend extra money."

Gun-Ho slipped an envelope with 1,000 cash in into Min-Hyeok's pants pocket.

"Don't do this. I can't take it, Gun-Ho."

Min-Hyeok pulled out the envelope from his pocket and gave it back to Gun-Ho, and Gun-Ho tossed it back to Min-Hyeok after he got on the bus.

"Bye, Min-Hyeok! I will see you later!"

"Gun-Ho, this is not... hmm..."

The bus that Gun-Ho was on slowly left the express bus terminal and headed to Hangzhou City when Min-Hyeok picked up the envelope from the ground, that Gun-Ho tossed towards him. Gun-Ho could see Min-Hyeok through the window; he was standing still while looking into a blank space.

"Min-Hyeok seemed to lose a lot of weight. Just hang in there, my friend. You will have good days soon."

Once he arrived at Hangzhou City, Gun-Ho made a call to Professor Jien Wang. However, the phone kept ringing without being answered.

"He is probably in a lecture."

Gun-Ho had stopped trying to call him, and he started walking around West Lake instead when he received a call from Professor Wang.

"You are already here? I have to give a special lecture to MBA students right now. Can we meet at the lobby of Mangho Hotel after an hour?"

Gun-Ho decided to stay around the West Lake area for a while before heading to Mangho Hotel since he had one-hour spare time before meeting Professor Wang. When he continued to walk along the West Lake, he saw a farmer who was wearing a triangle straw hat; he was selling lotus seed. It was not something he could easily find in Korea.

"How much is it?"

"It's two Yuan per bag."

Gun-Ho walked toward Mangho Hotel while eating the lotus seed piece by piece.

Professor Wang arrived at the lobby of Mangho Hotel with a huge briefcase; he probably came straight from his lecture.

"Hey, Gun-Ho! Good to see you, my friend."

"Hey, Jien. Let's have a drink."

"Of course. Having a drink with a good friend always makes me happy."

The two men headed to a restaurant called Punghaechancheong which Professor Wang recently marked as a good restaurant while putting arms around each other's shoulders.

"Give us one bottle of Jian Nan Chun, please!"

The two friends drank while having a lot of fun talking to each other.

"How's Attorney Young-Jin Kim doing? He is really a good friend. I heard he is busy these days in working on the joint venture case for Lymondell Dyeon."

"Yeah. I've met the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch as well. They haven't yet made a contract or anything official."

"When two parties try to have a joint venture together, they shouldn't keep on insisting on their own terms. Having a joint venture together is like having a marriage; the two parties should understand each other's position and interest, and try to work it out. Don't you think?"

"Well, it's easier said than done. It's all about money."

"I actually recommended President Amiel of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch to have a joint venture with China. But he said no. He said that China doesn't have advanced enough compound mixing technologies and he couldn't rely on the quality of China's chemicals and molding techniques."

"China has many global companies."

"However, after giving some thought to it, I sort of agree with President Amiel's view now."

"Why is that so?"

"The problem that China has is not about the technologies or resources, but it's more about the ethics of people who are running the companies."

"I believe there are a lot of well-respected businessmen in China."

"Of course there are many. However, there are way more unethical businessmen in China than in Japan or Korea. That is a big problem. I am embarrassed to tell you this but some Chinese people even make a fake egg and sell it. What would happen if they use pigments for their compounds, which were sold by an unethical seller? They would have to export those products too."

"Hmm."

"I could see it in a different angle because of Amiel. I think a person like you should do a manufacturing business rather than a rental property business. Manufacturing business can create a lot of jobs, so it could serve well for the welfare of the country."

"Jien, I am not that smart and I don't have that much money to start a manufacturing business. I'd better cut my coat according to my cloth."

Professor Jien Wang ordered one more bottle of Jian Nan Chun.

"President Goo, why don't you start a manufacturing business? It is not necessarily a doomed business. I know that everyone these days wants to get into an IT business, entertainment business or game industry. However, the basic industry which supports a country's economy strongly is a manufacturing business."

"I see what you mean, Professor Wang. I will think about it when I see an opportunity."

"Oh, by the way, Seukang Li will more likely move back to Shanghai soon. His

industrial park project is highly recognized as a success."

"If he moves back to Shanghai, which position he would take?"

"He is a deputy mayor of a small city right now. If he could move to Shanghai, I believe he will probably take the position of a director of the bureau. That's a high ranked position because Shanghai is a big city."

"Of course. Shanghai is a big city with probably more than 10,000,000 populations."

That day, Gun-Ho and Jien Wang drank a lot and went to karaoke to continue their fun night.

The karaoke was surprisingly crowded by a lot of pretty girls.

"How come there are tons of pretty girls here today?"

They asked the owner of the karaoke.

"Oh, there was a model contest sponsored by a cosmetic company in the area. These girls are participants of the model contest from other regions, and they are here to make some extra money.

"Are you saying that these model contest participants came to the karaoke to make money?"

"That's right. Our karaoke is an expensive high-end karaoke with a lot of foreign customers. So these girls all came here expecting to make good money by working here tonight. There are many students among them. Choose any girl you want to have fun with."

"Hmm."

Professor Wang clicked his tongue.

"President Goo, let's get out of here."

"Why? I like here. It's getting fun."

"There are too many people here who could see us. Let's go somewhere quiet."

Professor Wang walked out of the karaoke while carrying his big briefcase. Gun-Ho thought it was a shame to miss the fun opportunity and followed Professor Wang out of the karaoke.

131 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 2 – PART 2

Professor Wang took Gun-Ho to a beer bar in the West Lake area, which was on the second floor of a commercial building. The view from the bar that was overlooking West Lake was magnificent. Having a beer while looking down the night streets of the West Lake area was a fantastic experience; they enjoyed their beer and the moment.

Until, late at night, the two friends talked about the topic that they both were interested—business management. Professor Wang passionately talked about the theory of it, and Gun-Ho focused on the practical side of it.

Professor Jien Wang was very knowledgeable about business management as a college professor.

He was a brilliant kid when he was young, and he used to teach at Yale University in the U.S. after completing his Ph.D. degree at the same university.

"Very impressive, Professor Wang. You sometimes amaze me with your knowledge... You seem to know everything about business management in theory."

"Theory is just theory. President Goo, you are the expert on the practical side of business management. Also, you are outstanding in making money."

"By the way, what's inside the huge briefcase that you are carrying around? There is more knowledge that you need an extra storage to put into, than what's in your head?"

"Hahaha. This is just survey documentation that my MBA students submitted after taking my special lecture today."

"What kind of lecture was it?"

"We just talked about cases. I didn't really give any lecture to them today, but I

let them discuss and debate on certain cases. The students seemed to have fun doing it, and there are new things to learn about for me as well."

"What kind of cases did you talk about?"

"The first case that we talked about was about Target Marketing. I gave them a fact pattern and a relevant question on that topic."

"What was the question?"

"The question was that... there were five women in a flight and they had an accident. One of the five women was a female president of a country, one was a scientist who received a Nobel Prize, one was a very rich woman, and one of them was an extremely popular actress which is an airhead but she was the most beautiful woman in the world. The last passenger of the flight was a female religious leader who was highly respected worldwide."

"Hmm."

"When the plane that those five women were on had an accident, the pilot had to throw out four of these five women to make the plane light enough to safely land on the ground. And the question that was given to the students based on this fact pattern was who the pilot should let go as a first victim."

"Hmm, who should the pilot throw out first?"

"You want to know? I gave a lecture when I was teaching in the U.S. with exactly the same scenario and the question."

"Hmm."

"There is actually no right answer to it. However, the pattern of the answers that different age group shows in selecting the first victim in the scenario is the thing that we need to pay attention to; it is very interesting and you will be surprised. The young students tend to abandon the actress and insist on saving the scientist. On the other hand, the group of older students insists on saving the actress."

"Really?"

"It is explained that the group of older people is trying to save the actress in an

effort to preserve the human species."

"You said that a beautiful actress is an airhead. Then why do they want to preserve the human species with a stupid woman? If you marry the stupid woman, you will likely to have a stupid child."

"That is common sense, right? However, many old people believe that stupid people can have a smart descendant as time goes by."

"What does it have to do with target marketing though?"

"Say, you have a company that produces products meant for teens. What if your company uses a beautiful model who is known to be an airhead and who had no historical consciousness for their products that were specifically targeted at teenagers? It won't work, right?"

"Hmm."

"Do you want to hear another fact pattern?"

"Yes, I am curious. This is fun. What was the other one?"

"It's about the process of building wealth."

"Hmm."

"Here we go. A poor factory worker wanted to be rich like Hu Xueyan (One of the richest businessmen in Chinese history)."

"How in the world could a factory worker possibly become a rich man?"

"That factory worker started working at a pharmaceutical company and he bought certain medicines; he carefully selected the medicines whose price is likely to increase. He bought them using the pharmaceutical company's money without telling anyone."

"You mean that the factory worker misappropriated the company funds?"

"That's right."

"The factory worker left the company after making a fortune and he didn't forget

to fill up the company account with the same amount that he previously misappropriated to make sure he didn't cause any financial loss to the company. That factory worker used the money that he made in this way to open a business in a traditional market. As he ran his own business, he also invested in various places and he started building wealth from there."

"Hmm."

"The question for the class discussion was what we should do about the factory worker's misappropriation of the company's funds."

Gun-Ho suddenly became sober. The fact pattern seemed to be describing his own story.

Gun-Ho drank more liquor hastily.

"Re, really? So what was the outcome of the discussion?"

"The answers that people gave show again different patterns with different age groups. They differ as to the degree of the punishment that the factory worker should receive. Teenagers become furious with anger and kept on insisting that they have to report the factory worker to the authority. On the other hand, the older people tend to let the factory worker go since he paid back the company without causing any financial loss."

"Forgiving him?"

"Many of these people want to fire him though rather than totally forgiving him by letting him keep the job. It shows that in reality, a poor factory worker without special talent cannot become wealthy unless a miracle happens to him."

"Hmm."

"Of course the offense that the factory worker committed requires the victim's complaint, so without the company's complaint, the factory worker can get away from his wrongdoing without being punished. However, I don't believe it is the right way to handle the situation."

"Hmm."

"I get mixed feelings when I give this kind of questions during my lecture. The economic ladder to climb up in China is collapsing. On the other hand, I heard that in Korea there are still opportunities for the poor to build their wealth since it is a developed country. I am envious of Korea."

Gun-Ho kept on drinking without saying a word.

"Hey, man, easy on your drinking. You had enough liquor today."

"Let's have one more bottle of liquor. The f*cking world."

"Haha. Let's call it a night. I will take you to your hotel. What was the room number again?"

Professor Wang helped Gun-Ho to walk by holding his arms and headed to the hotel that Gun-Ho was staying.

When Gun-Ho returned to Korea from the trip to China, he felt exhausted.

He went to a massage shop to relax and recover from his travel fatigue.

"I feel much better after having two hours of massage and dry sauna. Traveling makes me really tired."

When Gun-Ho got back to his office, he made a call to the branch manager of the stock brokerage company.

"Wow! President Goo? I am extremely glad that you called me."

"Let's have lunch together."

"Of course. I'm honored to have lunch with you."

132 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho had lunch with the branch manager of the stock brokerage firm at a Japanese sushi restaurant.

"Sir, which stocks do you currently invested in these days? Even though I am a branch manager, I can't look into a client's account without their consent."

"I have Kumho Chemical stock."

"I see. It is a very good choice. You must have some sort of insight into selecting the right stock as a big player."

"Do you have any information on Kumho Chemical?"

"The older brother of Kumho Asiana Group recently tried to make an M&A of Daewoo Construction Company and failed to do so. That resulted in deeper discord between the two brothers."

"He tried to get something he couldn't get. Daewoo Construction Company is too big for him to acquire. I guess the people around the older brother didn't assist him right."

"The brothers of Kumho family were supposed to equally share Kumho Chemical stock as 10.1% for each. However, they failed to maintain this state as the younger brother is trying to increase his share; that's what I heard."

"Hmm."

"If that is what's really happening, the price of the stock will go up again."

"I currently have 30 billion won worth of stocks through your stock brokerage firm."

"Wow. Did you say 30 billion won?"

"I suppose your company must have clients who are bigger players than me in the stock market; especially your firm is located in Gangnam."

"Oh my goodness, sir. Even in Gangnam, there is no one who places tens of billions of won in their stock account. As far as I know, you are the biggest player in the stock market."

"If I want to sell some stocks and invest more in Kumho Chemical, how much do you think I should buy?"

"If I were you, I would invest 30% of the total funds in the stock account, in Kumho Chemical."

"Which stock should I buy with the remaining funds then?"

"What do you think of Macquarie Korea Infrastructure Fund (MKIF)?" Their stock price doesn't fluctuate significantly and also you can expect to receive a dividend."

"It's a joint venture of Macquarie Group and Shinhan Group, right?"

"That's right. You know about that company?"

"Actually I have a joint venture myself with China as well."

"Oh, you do?"

"Infra companies rarely go under."

"I am a risk taker and a winner. I don't like stable stocks."

"But you want to invest in the stock market within some sort of safety zone."

"Thank you for meeting with me and giving me information today."

"Anytime, sir. I enjoyed meeting with you. We learn a lot from big player investors like you as well."

When he got back to his office, Gun-Ho thought of what the branch manager of the stock brokerage company said.

"The brothers of Kumho family no longer maintain the same number of shares on Kumho Chemical stock."

Gun-Ho smiled.

After three months, when Gun-Ho opened his stock account, his eyes widened. He could feel that his body temperature was rising. He then thought that he shouldn't show his current emotion to anyone.

"Oh my goodness. The price of Kumho Chemical stock increased three times. My shares of Kumho Chemical are worth 90 billion won now."

Gun-Ho wanted to scream in excitement and laugh loudly, so he ran to the underground parking lot where he parked his Land Rover. Once he got into his car, he started the engine and began to laugh like a crazy man.

"Hahahahaha."

There was no one in the parking lot, and because of the sound of his car engine, no one would be able to hear his laughter.

Gun-Ho was actually going to sell all of the Kumho Chemical stock earlier.

"It's stupid to sell the stock knowing that the Kumho brothers are still fighting each other."

Gun-Ho felt a sense of relief.

'Good opportunity doesn't often come in a lifetime. Chairman Lee told me not to invest in the stock market since the other player's cards are unknown. However, this was a special case. I could see the other player's cards, and it is a rare opportunity that I encounter maybe once in a lifetime. I shouldn't sell the stock just yet.'

Gun-Ho felt the urge to sell the stock and grab the cash of 90 billion won, so he could acquire Mulpasaneop with the fund.

'No! No! This is an opportunity that comes once in a lifetime. I see the other player's cards!'

Gun-Ho needed help to suppress his urge to sell the stock; maybe he should go on a trip abroad.

However, if he traveled more than a week, the trip would probably bore him; he would probably think of going home immediately.

"I should at least wait for six months before I sell the stock. What should I do during those six months? Should I go to a private institution and learn something? Just like how I learned about the auction?"

Gun-Ho registered for an English course in the Gangnam area. He also registered for a Japanese course that he could take in the afternoon. He actually didn't care much about learning foreign languages; he just needed something to distract himself from thinking of stock.

"Let's just learn the basic English and Japanese, so I can at least say hi in those languages."

Gun-Ho was well aware of the fact that it took time to learn a foreign language, and it was impossible to speak a foreign language in a day or two.

"It took me three years to speak Chinese, and I wasn't even fluent at that time. I will be satisfied if I could say hi in English and read Katakana and Hiragana in Japanese."

Gun-Ho didn't expect much at all while he was attending the language classes to learn English and Japanese.

Gun-Ho was having his usual day.

He went to his office in the morning and listened to Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong's report; he then signed on their reports. He read three different newspapers: an economic newspaper, a conservative-inclined daily newspaper, and a progressive daily newspaper.

"I need to know the view from both sides: conservative and progressive groups, so I don't lose my sense of balance."

After reading those three different newspapers, it was usually lunchtime.

Gun-Ho usually went to a luxurious restaurant and had tasty food for his lunch since he had more than enough money to ignore the lunch cost.

In the afternoon, he attended two different language classes to learn English and Japanese. Once the classes ended, he practiced golf or worked out in a gym.

The instructors of the language classes were young female native speakers. Many housewives from Gangnam came to Gun-Ho's language classes as well. They were not really studying hard, but it seemed that they just came to the class for fun.

GH Development Company was doing fine. Even though it was a small company with a small office, which was running four OneRoomTels, the office was big enough to give space to two employees and Gun-Ho. The company was also financially doing good enough to pay two employees too. Gun-Ho also liked the fact that he could always ask either Manager Kang or Ms. Ji-Young Jeong for any necessary work or errands.

Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong trusted Gun-Ho since he was treating them well, and they knew Gun-Ho was a wealthy man even though his company was a small-sized company.

The joint venture that Gun-Ho was participating in was doing fine as well. He invested his 1.5 billion won to this joint venture, and the company didn't have to spend those funds any longer because it could run with the rent they were receiving from companies in the industrial park. So, at this point, Gun-Ho didn't have to invest an additional fund to the joint venture.

"It usually takes way more than 1.5 billion won to start a joint venture."

Gun-Ho's joint venture wouldn't make a significant amount of money in a short period of time; it was not that kind of business. However, it could bring in steady income. Gun-Ho was especially content with the fact that he could use the experience and connection he gained by participating in the joint venture as a stepping stone when it became the right time to get into the Chinese market with his own future business.

Gun-Ho also placed the right person in the joint venture for him in China. Min-Hyeok who went to high school together with Gun-Ho was also born to a poor family as Gun-Ho, so they shared similar life experiences and understood each

other better. Min-Hyeok was by nature a hard worker and an earnest person. Gun-Ho was sure that he was the perfect person to oversee the business activities in China.

133 Dreaming about Having a Manufacturing Company 3 – PART 2

All of Gun-Ho's attention was being paid to the Kumho Chemical stock right now. Its price hiked three times up, and it made Gun-Ho's currently retaining stock value over 90 billion won.

Gun-Ho was holding on to the stock without selling it just yet. He decided to keep it for now because he didn't hear anything about the reconciliation of the two brothers of Kumho family.

"I am certain this stock's price will go up higher. I just have to suppress my urge to sell it!"

Gun-Ho wanted to tie his hands somewhere so he wouldn't be able to sell the stock. He didn't even open the stock trading website on his computer for some time now.

He eagerly wanted to acquire Mulpasaneop. The price of the acquisition was not a problem for Gun-Ho. The real problem would come along after he purchased the company. He would have to take over all debt that the company had, and he was not sure if he could handle it.

"Their debt is definitely more than 50 billion won, and there is possibly more to it that is hidden somewhere."

Gun-Ho just kept an eye on the company for now.

He could acquire the company right away once he sold all of his stocks. However, that was not what he wanted to do because it was too risky. If something went wrong after he acquired the company, then he would lose all he had.

"I have to look before I leap."

Gun-Ho was being extremely careful. He knew what his life would be like

without money by experience, so he didn't do anything reckless or careless with his money. When he wanted to invest in something, he always thought about it twice or three times before doing it.

It seemed that the joint venture between Lymondell Dyeon and the Korean company—Egnolak—didn't work out.

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim to ask about it.

"Attorney Kim? How's the joint venture of Lymondell Dyeon going?"

"It's not going anywhere. I guess it won't work."

"I see."

"The president of Egnopak is demanding too much."

Egnopak was well known as extremely particular about hiring their employees among job seekers as well. The company posted a job advertisement for an entry position every year, and the competition was over 100:1. They demanded extremely high qualification on the job candidates as well.

"I remember that it was impossible to get into this company with a college degree from a province."

Gun-Ho had heard about it from people who were studying in Noryangjin.

"My older brother graduated to a mid-ranked college in Seoul, and he scored 950 in TOEIC. However, Egnopak rejected him based on his papers; they didn't even bother inviting him for an interview."

"That company also requires many specific things to be included in a personal essay that needs to be attached to the job application."

"Instead, they pay very well. Even an entry position receives 50 million won per year."

Gun-Ho should have felt honored to be with the owner-president of this famously particular company in the same space and to have a cup of tea with him. The president who had a large round face like a car wheel with small eyes

was often seen in the media.

Gun-Ho remembered a news article he read years back about the president.

"Our company is looking for a new employee who had a sense of ownership about the company he is working for. I came this far after overcoming all sorts of management crisis."

Gun-Ho chuckled.

"His father acquired a factory that Japanese people left behind before returning to Japan. It was right after Korea gained its independence from Japan. That was how the Egnopak president's father built his wealth. His father was a pro-Japanese person; he had even contributed a plane to Japan, and his daughter is a professor at a good university in Seoul. She must be doing very well in school, huh?"

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim again.

"Hey, it's me again. How much did you say was the total investment fund that Lymondell Dyeon and Egnopak agreed on for the joint venture?"

"It's 20 million dollars."

"Hmm. Then each company will have to come up with 10 million dollars. 10 million dollars is a lot of money."

Gun-Ho thought that Egnopak would invest in kind by contributing land to build a factory on and construction of a factory and preparing the necessary equipment.

'With 10 million dollars, they can build a factory in a province with all kinds of advanced technology in it. They would be able to bring ten extruders by purchasing them instead of leasing them. However, it's funny that Lymondell Dyeon had to invest 10 million dollars. They will need to bring raw materials, but it won't cost them much. Their intangible asset—goodwill—must be worth substantially. It's like the premium I had to pay for the restaurant I purchased in Noryangjin. Well, if I can make a lot of money, then I am willing to pay for a high premium.'

Attorney Young-Jin Kim was representing Lymondell Dyeon, and he was on their side, of course.

"Lymondell Dyeon is a global company. Why would they go through all these hassles to work with Egnopak?"

"Then, is Amiel looking for another Korean company to do the joint venture with?"

"He is not rushing. The joint venture with Japan is selling a significant number of products right now anyway."

"I see. The Japanese market is large. That makes sense."

"Oh, by the way, Amiel is asking for you to come to Japan to visit him with me. Would you like to go?"

"That sounds good."

"I am currently working on a case about the issuance of foreign convertible bonds for a big company. So I don't have time for the trip this week. How about next week?"

"Convertible bonds? Isn't it handled by a stock company?"

"Companies want to consult us because of legal issues around it, and the papers are all in English. That's how a person like me makes a living. Overseas convertible bonds are handled by Morgan Stanley or Goldman Sachs. Korean stock companies handle it as well."

"Oh, I see."

"I think the work will be completed by the end of this week. So, let's go to Tokyo next week."

"Okay. Just let me know."

Gun-Ho decided to take a trip to Japan and have fun there in order to distract himself from feeling an urge to sell his stock.

Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim&Jeong completed his overseas convertible bond work and took a vacation. He was ready to go on a trip to Tokyo with Gun-Ho.

Since it was not a business trip for a legal work assigned to him by the law firm but it was purely his personal trip, Attorney Kim had to pay for his own travel expenses this time.

"President Goo? I will make a reservation for a hotel. We'd better save money, right?"

"Which hotel are you going to reserve?"

"I know a less pricey hotel around Minami-Senju Station. Amiel's office is close to the station as well. Nihonbashi is around there too."

"We don't often go to Tokyo. Let's stay in a good and decent hotel. I will pay for it."

"Whoever pays for a hotel, we don't have to waste our money, right?"

"I will make a reservation for a hotel. New Ontani Hotel in Akasaka looked good. I saw the hotel last time I went to Japan for a tour."

Gun-Ho had once been to Japan before. He went there for a tour after he had come back from China. At that time he couldn't afford to stay in an expensive hotel like New Ontani. However, he was different now. He had 90 billion won worth of stock in his account."

"I won't be able to buy your flight ticket, but I can pay for the hotel we will be staying in. It will be just for three nights or so."

"But still..."

"Don't worry about it. I will take care of it. I will talk to you later."

134 Geisha Mori Aikko 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made a call to a travel agency that he had always been using for his previous travels.

"Hi, I need two flight tickets to Tokyo. Also, could you make a reservation for a hotel? I like New Ontani Hotel in Akasaka, Tokyo. Please ask them to include breakfast as well."

Gun-Ho changed a lot over the years.

He was now proactive and no longer hesitated when he worked. He used to be indecisive, and he always felt inferior to others in most situations. He even stuttered sometimes when he felt nervous or pressured. However, he was no longer that person. In the Western world, people say, "Money talks" as a person gains power if he has a lot of money, to say what he wants, and people would listen and pay attention to him. Gun-Ho proved that saying was true. Gun-Ho felt confident all the time.

Attorney Young-Jin Kim felt sorry, and he felt somewhat owed to Gun-Ho when he found out that Gun-Ho reserved the luxurious 5-star hotel for him.

"President Goo? I found a Japanese-Korean interpreter for us. He will help us while we stay in Japan."

"Really? That's awesome."

"He is one of my colleague's younger brother who is a Ph.D. student in Japan."

"I will pay him per day."

"No, you don't have to. I will take care of it."

"By the way, do we take a limousine bus from Haneda Airport to Akasaka?"

"No, we don't have to. Amiel will send a car to pick us up at the airport."

"Really? That's very nice of him."

"Okay, then. See you at the Incheon International Airport tomorrow."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim arrived at Haneda Airport in Tokyo. It was a beautiful April where Sakura flowers were in full blossom. When Gun-Ho walked out to the waiting area at the airport, he saw two people who were waving a white paper with Young-Jin Kim's name on. Attorney Young-Jin Kim walked toward those two men.

One of them was the chauffeur who Amiel sent to pick up Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim, and the other person was Jeong-Rok Han who was a Ph.D. student at Tokyo University.

"Hi. I'm Jeong-Rok Han. Jeong-Ryeul Han is my older brother."

"Oh? That's right. You look just like your brother. I work with Attorney Han."

"My brother told me a lot about you. Please talk to me in a casual way; I am younger than you, and you work with my older brother."

"This is President Gun-Ho Goo. He is with me."

Jeong-Rok Han gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho. The young man was wearing glasses.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Gun-Ho didn't even twitch his head when he introduced himself to this young man. Gun-Ho now knew how to behave like an important and superior person.

"Oh, this is a chauffeur from Lymondell Dyeon. I just met him here too."

The chauffeur looked like in his 50s. He greeted Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim with a broad smile. Since Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim both didn't speak Japanese, they just said hi in Japanese and let Jeong-Rok Han take care of the rest of the parts.

During the ride from Haneda Airport to Akasaka, Jeong-Rok Han did all the talking; he seemed to be having a lot of fun.

"New Ontani Hotel is a great hotel. I did some interpretation work there last winter when two congressmen from Korea came to Japan. They stayed at New

Ontani Hotel as well. The hotel has a beautiful garden that had been there for 400 years. It is a traditional Japanese style garden and it is very famous for its beauty."

Gun-Ho asked,

"How old are you, Mr. Jeong-Rok Han?"

"I'm 31 years old. Please consider me like your younger brother."

Jeong-Rok Han slightly nodded his head when he talked. With that gesture, he looked more like a Japanese man.

When Gun-Ho arrived at the hotel, he quietly asked for Jeong-Rok Han.

"We will stay in Japan for the next three days. I guess you will have to help us a lot, and I appreciate it."

Gun-Ho gave 100 dollars in cash to Jeong-Rok Han.

"Wow! 100 dollars! Thank... thank you, sir."

Jeong-Rok Han grabbed Gun-Ho's luggage right away and carried it for him. Gun-Ho was amazed at how much things had changed.

"I was nothing but a factory worker who graduated from a low-ranked college in the countryside, a few years back. And now, a Ph.D. student at Tokyo University is carrying my luggage for me."

Gun-Ho smiled bitterly.

At the lobby, Gun-Ho saw Amiel; he was already there to greet Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim.

"Hey, Gun-Ho and Young-Jin, good to see you guys here!"

The three men shook the hands of each other pleasantly.

Young-Jin and Amiel talked to each other in English, and the Korean-Japanese interpreter—Jeong-Rok Han seemed to be astonished by Young-Jin's fluent English. Because of the Language difference and capacity, Amiel talked with

Young-Jin most of the time in English, and Gun-Ho usually talked with Jeong-Rok in Korean.

"Mr. Jeong-Rok Han, is there any good restaurant that you want to recommend around here?"

"There are many bars outside the hotel that you might like. For food, you can either eat at one of the restaurants at the hotel or if you'd like to have Korean food, there are Korean restaurants around here too. I know a good Korean restaurant that specializes in Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup).

"Really?"

Gun-Ho took his party to a restaurant at the hotel, called Suksimjeong.

"I've googled a good place to eat here, and this restaurant is good at grilled food on a hot plate. Let's have dinner here for today and then have a desert outside the hotel. I will treat you all with dinner."

Gun-Ho's party enjoyed grilled food at the restaurant; it had a nice atmosphere.

"Wagyu (Japanese beef) is really tasty just like people said. It has the right tenderness, and it is very delicious."

Amiel suggested that,

"Let's do this. Let's first visit the Dyeon Japan factory in Yokohama City. Since President Goo is here, I want to hear his opinion about the factory."

"My opinion? What do I know to give such an opinion?"

"You'll probably tell us some of your insight once you see the factory. You used to work in a plastic factory, right?"

"Well, I'm not sure about it. However, since we are here, let's have a tour of the factory. Is that okay, Attorney Kim?"

"Sure. I've never had a tour at a factory before. It should be interesting."

"And the day after tomorrow, we'll go play golf in a golf field that is located in

Inchihara City. What do you think?"

"Sounds good. Let's do that, and we'll be going back to Korea on the third day."

"Also let's have a drink after playing golf, and the person who lost at the golf game will buy us drinks; I mean a lot of drinks."

"Sure."

Gun-Ho's party went to Yokohama City to see the Dyeon Japan factory. The factory was not big unlike Gun-Ho expected, maybe because it was located in an area close to a city, and the price of the land must be expensive. However, the interior of the factory was very clean. Every single worker at the factory was wearing a grey-colored uniform and a hat. The extruders were making a loud noise.

"Our factory is located close to a residential area, so we tried to lower the noise level but we failed to do so. Whenever the factory makes a loud noise, we get complaints right away."

"Really? How many products do they produce per day? And what about sales?"

Gun-Ho thoroughly checked things and made a note.

Young-Jin asked Gun-Ho with a smile,

"Hey, you are not starting a joint venture with them, right? What are you writing all those for?"

"I'm just interested in it. It could be useful someday, right?"

At the unit where chemical compounds were made, the workers were wearing a mask. Young-Jin Kim and Jeong-Rok Han stopped at the unit entrance, probably because of the chemical smell and powders that were flying in the air. Gun-Ho looked closely at the ingredients listed on the vinyl bag of chemical compounds.

"Amiel, is it okay if I take pictures of the factory's interior?"

"Pictures? Hmm... Well, we don't usually allow photographing the factory; however, I will let you do it, President Goo. Just keep them to yourself."

135 Geisha Mori Aikko 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho took pictures of products sized of a red bean, which were exiting the extruder. The products were coming out in different colors which indicate their different uses. Some were to be used for home appliances and some were meant to be used for automobile parts. In a plastic factory, these products were used to produce plastic plates or various sorts of parts or tools after they melt them again and molded them into the desired shape.

"Did you say you don't export any of these products outside Japan?"

"All of the products that we produce at this factory are used in Japan."

"Hmm..."

Gun-Ho nodded.

On the second day of Gun-Ho's trip to Japan, Amiel took Gun-Ho's party to Yonehara Golf Club. They took a shuttle bus and arrived at the golf club after an hour. The golf course was located at a 400,000 pyung hill.

"Wow. This is so beautiful."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim who had been in many different golf courses before was amazed.

"I feel like I can breathe better here."

The clubhouse was pretty as well. The building was constructed in a western style.

"If Jien Wang was here, he would have said that this was built in Seobanah (España in Chinese pronunciation) style."

Gun-Ho was talking to himself, and Attorney Young-Jin Kim seemed to have heard him.

"Seobanah? What is Seobanah? This is a Spanish style building!"

"Seobanah means Spain. Chinese people call Spain—Seobanah."

"Oh, really?"

Attorney Young-Jin Kim laughed.

Just in time, Gun-Ho's phone rung.

"Huh? It's from Korea. Maybe it's from my office; did something happen?"

The phone call was actually from Gun-Ho's high school classmate—Won-Chul Jo who was working in a big company as a manager.

"Gun-Ho? It's me, Won-Chul Jo."

"Yes, hey, what's up?"

"Did Suk-Ho call you about the gathering? We are trying to have a gathering with friends from high school."

"Yes, I heard it from Suk-Ho."

"I want to talk to you about the gathering. Do you have time tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow is not good for me. I am in Japan right now. I'm taking this call in roaming."

"Really? What are you doing there?"

"I'm playing golf with friends here."

"Really?"

Won-Chul didn't say anything for a second then continued to talk.

"Are you playing golf with some of our friends from high school? I can't think of anyone from our friends who would go to Japan to play golf."

"I'm with other friends you don't know."

"Who are they?"

Gun-Ho was wondering why Won-Chul wanted to know who he was playing golf with. Won-Chul was being nosy, Gun-Ho thought.

"An attorney friend from Kim&Jeong and a president of the Japan branch office of Lymondell Dyeon."

"Kim&Jeong law firm? Wow. You are living large."

"I'm coming back to Korea the day after tomorrow. I will call you then. I gotta go. It's my turn to tee off."

"Okay. I'm sorry. I will let you go."

"This is my first time being in a golf field."

Jeong-Rok Han who came along with Gun-Ho's party to the golf field to interpret for Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim said. He was watching them play golf with a curious look on his face.

"Hmm, then watch how badly I play golf."

"What?"

Jeong-Rok Han laughed.

A good golf player—Attorney Young-Jin Kim and Amiel—continued to make a birdie while Gun-Ho keeps making a bogey. Even with a lot of bogeys, Gun-Ho was doing not bad at all; he played along with Attorney Kim and Amiel. His ball was once dropped into the bunker at the 8th hole. Except that, he was doing fine. They finally finished 18 holes.

"My ball was moving by itself against my intention."

"President Goo, you lost the game no matter how you look at it. You'll be buying us a drink."

After Gun-Ho's party left Yonehara Golf Club, Amiel took them to a bar in Shinjuku City.

The bar was luxuriously decorated. Its yard was very well landscaped with

flowers, and the cherry blossoms were in full bloom.

Amiel teased Gun-Ho.

"Hey, President Goo. This bar is so special that not many Korean has been here before. Even a minister of Korean government wouldn't be able to come here just because they want to. It is very expensive here."

"How much do they charge? I think I can handle it. Let's get in!"

Amiel chuckled.

"Why are you laughing?"

"You can't just go in there and expect to be served with liquor. They selectively accept their own customers, and you have to make a reservation in advance; it is a must."

"Really? Are you saying you already made a reservation with them?"

"I actually did. I told them that I will bring a very rich Korean man, who has a joint venture with China. I also told the chief hostess that this man is an important figure so they'd better serve him well."

Amiel kept smiling while he was saying it.

"Irasshaimase (Welcome in Japanese)"

Two young women who were wearing Yukata came out and greeted Gun-Ho's party.

"Amiel-san desu ka? (Are you Mr. Amiel?)"

"Hai (Yes)."

Once Gun-Ho's party get on the floor, a middle-aged woman who was also wearing a Yukata came out and greeted them.

"Oh, Amiel-san. It has been a while."

"How are you Mama-san?"

The floor in the room where Gun-Ho's party was shown to was neatly covered with tatami, and in the middle of the room, there was a floor table. The four men sat at the table: Gun-Ho, Young-Jin Kim, Amiel, and the interpreter—Jeong-Rok Han. Jeong-Rok was busily looking around the room; it seemed that he had never been to a place like this before. Gun-Ho recently gained a bit of weight, and he was not skinny anymore, probably because he had been well fed lately. He now had a fine presence. Mama-san recognized Gun-Ho at a glance.

"Oh, this must be the Goo-sama (Mr. Goo) who is running a big business."

Mama-san placed her head on the floor to show Gun-Ho her respect and to give a bow.

"I am Segawa Joonkko. I'm very pleased to meet you, sir."

Mama-san did the same thing to Attorney Young-Jin Kim and also gave a slight bow to Jeong-Rok.

Fancy and neat Japanese dishes started coming out.

Some tasted just like Korean sashimi so Gun-Ho could comfortably eat them. Gun-Ho couldn't digest some spices since those spices tasted strange. The liquor they brought along the food was a type of sake; the liquor had a tender and clean taste.

After Mama-san left the room, two women entered the room with a Japanese traditional musical instrument—Shamisen. They both looked like in their 30s. They kneeled on the floor gently and started playing Shamisen.

It was a new and pleasant experience for Gun-Ho to drink liquor while listening to Shamisen. Gun-Ho felt like he became some sort of a lord in ancient Japan.

Once they had a good time drinking with music, Amiel called for Mama-san. He seemed to ask something very special to Mama-san.

"Joonkko-san, I brought a very special guest here today. Please bring the most beautiful dancing geisha—Mori Aikko—who used to be very famous in Gion (Kyoto's famous geisha district)."

"Hahaha. You can't just call for Mori Aikko like that."

"Please tell her that a billionaire from Korea is here."

Gun-Ho was startled and said,

"Hey, what are you talking about? I am not a billionaire!"

Mama-san made a comment to what Gun-Ho's said,

"Hahaha. I can tell he is a billionaire. I've been seeing a lot of people because of the nature of my business. I know how to read people's face and know what kind of people they are. I know you are a billionaire."

Everyone in the room laughed. Gun-Ho was the only one who felt a bit uncomfortable.

136 Geisha Mori Aikko 2 – PART 1

The four men continued to drink.

Gun-Ho felt like he could drink more than usual that day, maybe because he did a good exercise earlier by playing golf.

Once the beautiful melody from the Shamisen stopped, a young lady in Kimono entered the room. Her face was covered with a geisha make-up; she was probably Mori Aikko girl that Amiel was talking about. She was a dancing geisha. The lady placed a hand fan she was carrying on the floor and kneeled, and then she placed her head on the floor and bowed to Gun-Ho's party.

"I am pleased to meet you. My name is Mori Aikko."

When Mori Aikko lifted her head slowly, Gun-Ho's party was all shocked.

"Wow! She is so beautiful!"

This woman had a peerless beauty.

The eyes of all three Asian men—Gun-Ho, Young-Jin, and Jeong-Rok—except Amiel widened. Amiel probably couldn't fully appreciate this girl's beauty because he might not know about the Asian beauty as much as the other men in the room. Jeong-Rok was especially lost in admiration of her beauty.

The two other girls who were holding Shamisen started playing music again.

And Mori Aikko who was kneeling on the floor picked up the hand fan from the floor and slowly stood up. She started dancing along with the melody from Shamisen.

"Wow!"

She looked like a fairy from heaven. Attorney Young-Jin Kim swallowed his saliva and Gun-Ho felt itchy somewhere on his body. Jeong-Rok couldn't close his mouth while watching her dancing.

The melody from Shamisen sounded sad. Many old melodies tend to sound sad compared to music these days. Aikko, this time, started singing along with the melody of Shamisen. She sounded sad.

"Sadameno Mijjiwa Gadenagoomo..."

Gun-Ho clapped Jeong-Rok on the waist, who still kept his mouth open.

"Could you translate the lyrics?"

"Oh, it says that even though the path of your destiny is a long way, you need to conceive scent."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho thought that the singing Mori Aikko seemed to be somewhat pitiful. Maybe it was the melody that she was singing made him feel that way, but it practically made him choke up.

"Of course, the path of destiny must be a long way."

The lyrics made him think of his life. Gun-Ho came this far putting all his energy and time into an effort only to make money, and he was not sure if it was the right way to live his life. Mori Aikko folded the hand fan and knelt on the floor again, and she placed her head on the floor and bowed.

"Thank you for watching my humble dance."

The three Korean men were just sitting there without saying a word, and Amiel clapped and laughed broadly.

"Wonderful!"

The three Korean men finally woke up by Amiel's clapping sound and started clapping along with Amiel. Mama-sang who was sitting next to Gun-Ho's party said,

"Did you enjoy her dancing? Mori Aikko is the most beautiful and the most popular girl among the dancing geishas in Tokyo."

"It was fantastic."

"Mori Aikko doesn't dance for any person, but she does only for special people. I asked her to come to dance for you because Amiel-san brought a special guest—President Goo."

Aikko stepped backward towards the door and walked out of the room after bowing again.

Amiel talked to Mama-sang pleasantly.

"Aikko looked prettier than the last time I saw her. In my American guy's eyes, she is very pretty."

"She is pretty and extremely popular; however, I'm worried about her because she hasn't put her hair up yet. She became already twenty years old this year."

"She didn't put her hair up yet?"

Gun-Ho remembered people saying that expression in golf when a person hadn't been in a golf field yet. He thought maybe Mori Aikko was practicing golf these days. He asked Mama-sang,

"Mama-sang, what do you mean by that she hadn't put her hair up yet? Is she playing golf in an indoor practice facility?"

"Hahaha, it has nothing to do with playing golf. Not putting her hair up means she is still a virgin."

"Really? She can date a man then."

"I meant that she couldn't find any man to put her hair up yet. Because she is a geisha, we are looking for a man who could put her hair up for her among our guests."

"Among the guests?"

"Yes, the guest who would put her hair up must be a gentleman who has a good manner and discipline. That man will become a sponsor to her forever. A geisha gets a reliable and stable sponsor and she usually doesn't get married. A geisha

chooses her own sponsor who is the best gentleman among gentlemen."

"Hmm."

The geisha's customs intrigued Gun-Ho.

"There must be tons of men who would put her hair up since she is such a beauty."

"Of course; however, Aikko is very picky. She said she wouldn't choose anyone if not the best man in the world."

Gun-Ho wanted to ask if it is possible for a foreigner to put her hair up, and then he decided not to. However, the interpreter—Jeong-Rok was asking the same question to Mama-sang already.

"Does she mind having a foreigner as her sponsor? Like a British or American guy?"

"Hahaha. Are you thinking of Amiel-san? Amiel-san is already married. Aikko wouldn't even consider a married man as her sponsor. The thing is that it's hard to find a single man who could afford to come to our bar since it is very costly."

"There are single young men who have a wealthy father."

"Aikko hates those types of men. She said those guys must be spoiled."

"Hmm."

"Aikko has her own sad life story. She lost her parents in a car accident when she was little. Her parents were teachers in an elementary school in Sapporo City. As an orphan, she moved from one relative's home to another until she came to Gion (Kyoto's famous geisha district). She was 14 at that time. Hahaha, by the way, you all are more interested in Aikko rather than your drink."

"Oh, we will have another bottle of sake, please."

Even after Gun-Ho came back to New Ontani Hotel, he couldn't stop thinking about Aikko. Her thick eyelashes, shiny eyes, and full lips... Gun-Ho couldn't help thinking about her. Especially, thinking of her shiny skin made his heart

flutter.

"Mori Aikko, I want to see her dancing again. Can I go that bar again on my own? But I can't speak Japanese."

Gun-Ho felt extreme thirst; he took out a bottle of water from the refrigerator in the hotel room and gulped down water. Gun-Ho decided to return to Korea for now, promising himself that he would come back again in the near future. He couldn't stay in Japan any longer this time even though he desperately wanted to, because Attorney Young-Jin Kim had to go back to Korea to work; his vacation was almost over.

When Gun-Ho came back to Korea, he received a phone call from Won-Chul Jo again.

"Gun-Ho? How was your trip to Japan?"

"It was okay. Thank you for asking."

"We will have the gathering with high school friends the day after tomorrow at Suk-Ho's bar."

"Suk-Ho from Gyeongridan Street?"

"Yeah, he said he would close the bar that day and lease the place to us for our gathering."

"Really? Okay. I will be there."

When Gun-Ho arrived at Suk-Ho's bar, there were about ten high school classmates. They already started drinking.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo! It's hard to recognize you. You changed a lot. You look like a real business owner now."

Won-Chul Jo stood up when he saw Gun-Ho entering the bar.

"How was Japan? You went there to play golf?"

"Hey, Gun-Ho, you are having a nice life. You went to Japan just to play golf,

huh?"

Suk-Ho showed a seat to Gun-Ho.

"I save a spot for you, Gun-Ho. Was the traffic heavy on the way here from Gangnam?"

Gun-Ho looked around the room. Half of the friends were wearing a suit with a tie and the other half was wearing a jacket. The ones who were wearing a suit and a tie must be employees of some companies.

137 Geisha Mori Aikko 2 – PART 2

At Suk-Ho's bar, the friends from Gun-Ho's high school continued to drink and eat food. Dishes were prepared and a box of soju was placed; however, those seemed to be not enough. The bar was filled with clamor.

"Hey, you, Suk-Ho, f*cker! Why don't you drink? You don't drink because you own this place?"

"You drink, you f*cker!"

"Hey, Byung-Chul Hwang! Why are you being so arrogant? Is it your tie that makes your neck stiff? Remember when I went to your research center to see you? You hurt my feelings when you said you couldn't come out and meet me just because you were in a meeting or something. Take this drink; it is the penalty you have to pay for treating your friend that way."

"Hey, you are wasting soju. Don't over pour it."

"You, f*cker. Sh*t up and just eat this!"

The bar was full of noise and also cigarette smoke. These people were in their mid-30s and they were supposed to know how to well behave with other people in a public place by now. However, they seemed to go back to the old days when they were still in high school, and they certainly seemed to enjoy each other's company.

Gun-Ho didn't enjoy it though. He didn't like the noise, smoke, and his high school friends' rudeness.

Won-Chul who was sitting next to Gun-Ho kept asking him to drink more, so Gun-Ho drank a few glasses of soju; however, his mind was somewhere else. He was thinking about the secret bar at Hannam Town and the quiet bar in Shinjuku City in Japan. Gun-Ho became acclimatized to the lifestyle for the rich.

"I don't see Jae-Sik Moon here, who used to sit in front of me in high school."

Jae-Sik Moon just crossed Gun-Ho's mind and he asked the friend who was

sitting next to him. Jae-Sik was living with her grandmother at that time. He had a poor family too.

"Jae-Sik? He is delivering packages for a living. He lost all his earnings in the stock market; I told him he shouldn't invest in the stock market. He now has a bad credit score, and he can't come and enjoy this type of gathering now."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho felt uncomfortable.

"Maybe the money I made from the stock market included Jack-Sik's money that he lost in the stock market."

Suk-Ho suddenly started screaming.

"Hey, stop talking for a moment, and listen to me. Won-Chul Jo who arranged this gathering for us has something to say."

The room became quiet and Won-Chul stood up from his seat.

"Umm, it has been already 15 years since we graduated from high school."

"Hey, just cut to the chase!"

"I'd like to make this gathering as our regular meeting so we could continuously share our friendship. I brought some flyers for it. Take a look at it."

"The name of our social gathering is WestFacing Club? Does the name mean something?"

"Many of us used to live in Juan Town in Incheon City or Bucheon. Our high school is located there too. So, to remember the area that we once lived in, I named our gathering WestFacing."

"It sounds like WaspFacing."

People chuckled.

Won-Chul Jo read the flyer he brought in to the friends at the bar. It was about starting a social gathering with friends from high school. Everyone agreed with

starting a gathering so they could meet each other on a regular basis. And then they started disputing over the amount of the membership fee, whether it should be 30,000 won or 50,000 won. The dispute lasted 30 minutes. Gun-Ho wanted to leave the bar after paying whatever amount of money they were asking.

"What do you think, Gun-Ho?"

"I'm good either way. I will just follow what is decided."

After determining the amount of the membership fee, they started spending another time on electing the president of the club. They all nominated Gun-Ho for the position because he was rich. Gun-Ho jumped up from his seat. The idea of taking charge of this club and constantly getting together closely with these people horrified him.

"I think Won-Chul Jo should take the president position since it was his idea to get together regularly in the first place. I am not good for the position. I will pay some money to support our meeting though."

Gun-Ho adamantly refused to take the position. Won-Chul, on the other hand, seemed to be interested in taking the position. Two very different types of people contrasted clearly; Gun-Ho was more like a recluse, while Won-Chul was a political person.

Gun-Ho took proactive action to confirm Won-Chul's election as the president of the WestFacing Club.

"Everyone, let's clap to congratulate Won-Chul on becoming our club's president."

One or two started clapping and then everyone clapped. Gun-Ho then stood up from his seat.

"I went to Japan last week and I have some left-over trip money. Let's move to another place; I will buy you all a drink with the money to celebrate the formation of the club. Where are we right now? We are in Itaewon Town, right? The famous Itaewon Town! It would be a shame if we don't drink more in Itaewon Town. Don't you think?"

"Yeah! You are absolutely right. You are good at speech, Gun-Ho. You were not

like this when we were in high school. Anyway, let's have more drink as Gun-Ho suggested!"

"Let's go!"

"Let's go!"

More than ten people as a group walked towards Itaewon Town.

As soon as Gun-Ho came to his office, he made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Attorney Kim? Is this a good time to talk?"

"Yeah, it's good. You spent too much on our last trip to Japan, Gun-Ho. I am sorry."

"Nah, don't mention it. It was not much at all."

"That bar in Shinjuku City cost you a fortune, right? That place is famous for its high price."

"It's okay. We all had fun, right?"

"By the way, what made you call me in this early morning?"

"Oh, I'm calling to ask you about an accountant. I'm looking for an accountant. Your firm has a lot of accountants, right?"

"That's right."

"If you have an accountant close to you, would you ask him to look for an account with a name, Nak-Jong Lee? From Anchang Accountant Office. I am sorry to call you to ask a favor in the early morning like this."

"An account's information can easily be found at the Accountant Association or something. Why don't you ask the accountant your company is working with?"

"I didn't want to involve the accountant who I am working with. He would want to take the job for him. It could be troubling."

"What are you up to, man?"

"I will tell you later."

"Okay, I will see what I can do. There are so many accountants. It will take me some time."

After lunchtime, Gun-Ho received a call from Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"No one at our firm knows the accountant, Nak-Jong Lee personally; however, one of my attorney colleagues knows the president of Anchang Accountant Office."

"Oh, then he can find out about that accountant, right?"

"Yeah, he said Accountant Nak-Jong Lee is in Cheonan City."

"That's about right! I think that's him!"

"Let me give you a phone number. It's not his personal cell phone number but it's his office number."

"Okay, thank you."

Accountant, Nak-Jong Lee is the one who had been handling Mulpasaneop's financial matters.

Gun-Ho lost in thought for a moment.

"Should I ask him how Mulpasaneop is doing right now?"

Gun-Ho then shook his head.

"He won't tell me like that. I am a stranger to him, and he won't reveal any information about his client to a stranger. He is not supposed to talk about his client's information to anyone. How should I approach him then?"

Gun-Ho started thinking with his arms crossed.

138 Company in Rehabilitation 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho at first wanted to give Accountant Nak-Jong Lee the impression that he was referred to him by someone he knew, and then he changed his mind.

"Maybe he would feel uncomfortable being referred by someone. Let's just go see him on my own. An accountant usually welcomes any person who needs his consultation."

Gun-Ho made a call to Anchang Accountant Office in Cheonan. Given the fact that the office had been handling a big company's financial matters like Mulpasaneop, it must be a decent accountant office.

"May I talk to Accountant Nak-Jong Lee?"

"He is not in the office right now. May I tell him who called?"

"I just would like to consult him. When do you expect him to come to the office?"

"He will be here after 2 pm."

"Okay. Thank you."

Gun-Ho slowly headed to Cheonan City in his Land Rover while humming Bohemian Rhapsody.

"Attorney Kim said the tax office of Cheonan City is located in Cheongsu Town."

"I am an artist who hunts companies. The founder of Hanjin Group—Jung-Hun Jo said that running a company is an art. That's right. I am an artist—a takeover artist."

Gun-Ho parked his car in front of the Cheonan tax office and looked around. Usually, an accountant office or tax accountant office was located close to the

tax office in the area.

"There we go. It's right over there on the fifth floor. Considering it is a province, I think there will be only two or three accountants working in that office."

"Hi. How may I help you?"

A female worker stood up and asked Gun-Ho who just entered their accountant office.

"Hi. I am here to see Accountant Nak-Jong Lee to consult about my financial situation."

"Have you made an appointment with him?"

"No, I haven't. I just came from Seoul."

The female worker went to an office and let the accountant know that someone from Seoul was here for a consultation.

"Let him in."

Gun-Ho entered the office and bowed to the accountant respectfully. The accountant looked like in his 50s and looked very experienced in the field.

"How can I help you?"

Gun-Ho gave his business card to the accountant and said,

"I do a rental property business in Seoul. I also have a joint venture with China in Jiangsu Province, China."

Accountant Nak-Jong Lee looked at Gun-Ho's business card and then looked at Gun-Ho's face; he had a suspicious look on his face.

"I actually came here to know about Mulpasaneop in Asan City."

"Are you a creditor to Mulpasaneop?"

"No, I'm not. I used to work at a company that was one of Mulpasaneop's vendors. I want to help the company."

"How do you think you can help the company?"

"I do a hard money business as well. I think I can lend some money."

Accountant Nak-Jong Lee said with a sneering look on his face.

"You have looked at their financial statements, haven't you?"

"I have a rough idea about their financial situation."

"If so, why would you lend money to them?"

"Even though they have no real properties that could be used as collateral for a loan, I think there should be some other way to get a loan; they should have other assets like equipment or something."

Accountant Nak-Jong Lee shook his head from side to side.

"That's nonsense!"

The female worker came into the room and left hot green tea on the table.

"I used to work at a factory before. A factory should have something valuable enough to use as collateral."

"I've never heard of using a lump of scrap metal as collateral for a loan. I don't think I can help you with the Mulpasaneop matter. Please leave."

"Let me ask you one thing, then I will leave. If I offer to lend money to Mulpasaneop with the interest of 20%, do you think the president of Mulpasaneop would take my money?"

"He would take your money, of course, because he has been suffering a lot with creditors. Are you aware that they already started the court receivership?"

Gun-Ho was a bit surprised but tried not to show his emotions to the accountant.

"I actually came here to ask you about it. I'd like to know their case number."

"You can ask the female worker outside the office. I will just get back to work now. I have so much work that I have to finish."

Gun-Ho bowed to the accountant respectfully before leaving his office.

"We might see each other again in the near future. Oh, I'd like to pay for the consultation fee; I guess I have to pay for your time."

"You don't need to pay the fee. Just go, please."

Gun-Ho walked towards the female worker with a smile.

"Thank you for the tea, Miss. I was told that I could ask you about the case number of Mulpasaneop."

The female worker searched a pile of documents for a while, and then she wrote down a case number on a yellow post-it before giving it to Gun-Ho.

"Daejeon District Court 20xx Court Receivership 000."

Gun-Ho took the memo and walked out of the office.

"I wanted to ask him about the number of Mulpasantop's creditors as well, but I guess that's not so important right now. Well, that company ended up being like this. I drove this far to get the case number; I guess I didn't at least waste the gas."

Gun-Ho was about to leave when he decided to get them something before leaving for Seoul. He purchased a box of fruit drinks and a box of walnut cookies.

"I'd better get along with the accountant office in case I need them again in the future."

Gun-Ho went back to the accountant office while carrying a box of drinks and a box of walnut cookies. The accountant was talking with the female worker in his office.

"Why did you come back?"

"I just wanted to give you these. You didn't even charge me for a consultation fee."

The female worker took the drinks and cookies from Gun-Ho with a smile.

"Thank you."

The accountant seemed to be relaxed a bit this time.

"You didn't have to bring me anything. I am no longer Mulpasaneop's accountant. Once a company starts its court receivership, they take care of the company, and their accountant is automatically released from the duty."

"I'm aware of it. I'm leaving now. Thank you for your time today."

Gun-Ho actually didn't know anything about it; he just pretended that he was aware of all that.

"I guess I will have to learn more about the court receivership."

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim. He didn't go straight to the topic that he wanted to talk about with him. Instead, he started some small talk.

"Hey, we have to do the golf thing again in China too. With Professor Jien Wang, right?"

"Sure. But not any time soon though. I have so much work piled up these days."

"That's good, right?"

"Yeah, but it's too much."

"Oh, do you happen to know an attorney who knows well about the court receivership? A company that I know started their court receivership."

"Why do you want to know about it? You want to make an M&A of that company?"

"Oh, is M&A the next step after a company starts the court receivership?"

"If they can't get back to the business on their own, an M&A is a good option for them. If you look at an economic newspaper, you will easily see an advertisement from an agency about M&A of a company."

"An agency?"

"Yes, they connect between a company and a buyer. It could be another firm like a law firm. Which company are you talking about, by the way?"

"I just want to know about the court receivership system."

"I know someone who is an expert in the court receivership. He is working in Seocho Town. And his office manager is also very experienced in that field as well."

"Will you introduce the office manager to me then?"

"Sure. I will make a call to that office. The attorney over there is my senior and he is a very good person. His office is in Seocho Town and it must be close to your office."

"Yeah. Thank you."

"Don't mention it. What are friends for?"

139 Company in Rehabilitation 1 – PART 2

It was around evening time when Gun-Ho received a text message from Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"The office manager's name is Se-Gil Lee, and his phone number is 010-2485-0000."

Gun-Ho made a call to the number right away.

"Office Manager Se-Gil Lee? I am referred to you by Kim&Jeong law firm. I'd like to have a consultation about the court receivership."

"Are you planning to apply for the court receivership for your company?"

"No, it's about a company that already started their court receivership process. I just like to know about the system."

"Do you have their case number?"

Gun-Ho gave the office manager the case number that he received from the accountant's office.

"Give me a moment."

It took less than a minute before the office manager got back to Gun-Ho, and he said,

"It doesn't look good. It's about Mulpasaneop, right? The company has more than 300 creditors. The company incurs a lot of expenses as well after the court receivership started."

"Umm, would you have lunch with me today? I know your office is in Seocho Town. I'm at Gangnam Station."

"Oh, I am not in Seoul right now. I am in Anseong City."

"Anseong City? I thought your office is in Seocho Town."

"Oh, we took a case yesterday of a company that is about to start their court receivership. I have to work here until 10 pm and I won't be in Seoul for a while."

"Oh, I see."

"If you need to see me anytime soon, why don't you come to Anseong City? I'm at the company's warehouse by myself."

"A warehouse?"

Gun-Ho couldn't understand why the office manager was at the company's warehouse by himself.

"Sure. I can come to Anseong City."

"I will be here. The company name is BC Teucksoogang."

Gun-Ho wanted to see this office manager as soon as he could. He wanted to know about Mulpasaneop's situation and also he had to learn more about the court receivership.

He entered BC Teucksoogang's address into the GPS navigator before heading to Anseong City. Even with the help of GPS navigator, Gun-Ho got lost once and wandered a lot before he could finally find the BC Teucksoogang's factory.

"F*ck! It was right under my nose."

Gun-Ho drove into the company yard. There was a security guard office without a security guard. A few workers in uniform were walking around here and there as well. Gun-Ho made a call to the office manager.

"Where are you? I'm in front of the factory right now."

"From the main entrance to the factory, do you see a small storage building behind the main factory?"

"Yes, I see it."

"I am inside that building. Once you enter the storage building, you will see a place with a divider screen. I'm there."

Gun-Ho grumbled,

"What in the world is he doing in that storage?"

Gun-Ho entered the warehouse building. He couldn't see anybody there though at first, and then he saw a light at the backside of the building.

"Hmm. That should be him."

Someone craned his neck out of the divider screen.

"Hey, it's right here."

"Are you the office manager—Mr. Se-Gil Lee?"

"That's me. Please come over here. Be careful with the pile of pipes there."

"What are you doing here?"

"Here?"

"This is the usual spot for my work. We don't want the company workers or creditors to know that we are working on the court receivership. And because of the nature of my work, I have to quickly finish the work before anyone finds out. I just need a space where I can work with my computer. So this is good."

"Oh, let me introduce myself to you. I am Gun-Ho Goo."

"I am the office manager of Hanbit law office—Se-Gil, Lee."

The two men exchanged their business cards to each other.

After exchanging business cards, they were about to sit on a chair when a man in his 30s came to the storage building. He was wearing a uniform; he was probably an employee of this company.

"Did you bring the vehicle registrations?"

"Yes, I did."

"Seven of them? Including the forklift truck?"

"Yes, I did."

"Why don't you put the papers on the desk? I will take a look at them later since I have a guest here now."

"Okay."

The worker walked out of the storage building after placing the papers on the desk. He looked exhausted.

"He looked very tired."

"That's probably because he hasn't been paid for a while now."

"They are not being paid?"

"Most companies start their court receivership when they couldn't pay their workers at least more than three months. They apply for the court receivership because they couldn't handle the situation."

"I'd like to know more about the system like how the court receivership works."

"You can easily find the information from a book, or on the Internet."

"I'd like to learn from the expert."

"The expert?"

The office manager chuckled for a while.

"The court receivership is like an individual rehabilitation."

"Individual rehabilitation?"

"If a person can't pay for his debt any longer, the court helps him to pay off the debt gradually without being bothered by creditors, right? While he is paying off the debt, the court lets him keep a certain amount of money for his living

expenses. That's why they call the process as rehabilitation so the person can live a normal life again after paying off the debt."

"Right."

"The same thing applies to companies. The court protects the company from creditors while they could pay off the debt. They are the companies in rehabilitation."

"Oh, I see. A worker came here earlier to give you the vehicle registrations. What is that for?"

"Those papers will be used when we apply for the court receivership."

"Why do they need them?"

"In applying for the court receivership, the company needs to explain what made them be in this financial crisis and how much assets and how much debt they currently have."

"To the court?"

"That's right. To the bankruptcy department of Daejeon District Court."

"A bankruptcy department?"

"Yes. The rehabilitation process is handled by the bankruptcy department of the court."

"Oh, I see."

"In order to show how much assets this company has, we need to show the court the company's real estate registration and vehicle registration, etc., right?"

"I see. That's why the worker brought the vehicle registrations to me."

"Once the application is accepted by the court, an accountant who is appointed by the court will come to the company and verify all the papers and stuff. And then, they determine whether they would start the court receivership or not."

"Hmm."

"When I checked the Mulpasaneop's case earlier on the court website, I saw that their creditors are over 300. The court will protect Mulpasaneop from those 300 creditors and let it pay off the debt gradually according to a plan they both agree on."

"Do you think the court will let Mulpasaneop start the court receivership?"

"The accountant who is appointed by the court will determine it. He will determine if it is better to let the company continue their business and pay off the debt, or if it is better to close the business and let their employees go. The judge will then make a final decision based on the accountant's investigated facts and professional opinion."

"If someone wants to make an M&A of Mulpasaneop, that person must take over the entire debts of 300 creditors, right?"

"That's right."

"How much do you think that would be?"

"I have no idea. You will have to find the information at the court."

Gun-Ho nodded. He thought he had a rough idea of how it worked now.

He then remembered what Chairman Lee told him the other day.

"If you want to catch a tiger, you must get into its mouth."

140 Company in Rehabilitation 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho thanked Office Manager Se-Gil Lee and told him that he wanted to buy him lunch.

"I can't. I need to prepare the application for the court receivership. The paperwork is like several hundreds of pages because I need to document the company's entire assets. This company is not a big company with only 50 employees, but the number of its creditors is over 150.

"That many?"

"Yes, because we need to include even a supermarket owner where the company bought a bottle of soy sauce on credit that hasn't been paid yet."

"I see."

Gun-Ho, instead of buying him lunch, put 20 dollars in a white envelope and gave it to him so he could use it for his meal later.

"You don't have to do this."

As the office manager said it, he took the envelope quickly with a smile.

"If you happen to have any further questions, just come and see me here. We, an office manager of a law firm, know better the practical side of the court receivership than a lawyer. If you go to a certified legal consultant's office to apply for court receivership, that consultant wouldn't actually work on the case, but his assistant would do all the work. That's how it works."

"Oh, really? Well, that kind of makes sense since the actual work of collecting necessary information, filling in the forms, filing the application, etc. would be done by a worker like you."

"Since I have to complete this application as soon as possible, I sometimes work

here all night. The application for the court receivership needs to be filed before we could apply for a receivership stay order."

"A receivership stay order?"

"We can file the court receivership and a receivership stay order simultaneously. Once a court's receivership stay order becomes effective, creditors can no longer bother the company to get paid for the debt. The court protects the company from being bothered by creditors temporarily. This needs to be done as soon as possible."

"Oh, I see. Well, I guess I shouldn't take too much of your time. I will leave now."

"According to your business card, your office seems to be around Gangnam station; so, it's close to our office. Let's have lunch or dinner together in the near future."

"Sounds good. Thank you."

When Gun-Ho came back to Seoul, he was again lost in thought.

"What am I going to do with Mulpasaneop?"

While he was thinking about Mulpasaneop, he received an unexpected call from Chairman Lee.

"I know you have been busy, but do you not go fishing anymore?"

"Oh, no, sir. I will go fishing whenever you come to the fishing site."

"I've seen Mr. Jong-Suk Lee come to the fishing site and do fishing by himself. He looked lonely."

"I will come fishing this Sunday, sir."

After getting off the phone with Chairman Lee, it occurred to Gun-Ho that he had been so distant from Jong-Suk even though he didn't intend to.

"He had been a friend to me when I worked at a factory and when I needed a

friend. However, I guess I left him alone for too long. I haven't really talked to him lately."

Gun-Ho made a call to Jong-Suk right away.

"Huh? Bro! I feel like it is the first time in years that I heard your voice."

"How have you been?"

"I am doing fine. I've heard you went to Japan to play golf recently."

"I went there once. It was sort of for business."

"I thought you forgot about me completely."

"How can I possibly forget you, man? I'm going fishing this Sunday. Why don't you come with me if you don't have any prior engagement?"

"Even though I have a schedule set up already, I will go fishing with you."

"Chairman Lee will come fishing as well."

"Okay. Just bring me a roasted chicken and soju."

Sunday came around.

Gun-Ho loaded his Land Rover with his fishing gears and headed to Pocheon City. Gun-Ho was going to Pocheon because he wanted to see Chairman Lee; he didn't really care much about fishing.

"He is a surprisingly wise man. With his extensive life experience and natural wit, he has a remarkable insight about business and even about life in general."

When Gun-Ho arrived at Pocheon City, he stopped by a restaurant to pick up two roasted chickens, Gimbab and soju before heading to the fishing site.

Gun-Ho then arrived at the fishing site that he used to come very often.

It was May. Trees started budding under the sun.

Chairman Lee, Manager Gweon and Jong-Suk were already at the fishing site.

"Bro! Long-time no see. You seem to have gained some weight."

"Hey, I brought roasted chickens and soju that you ordered, man. They are in my trunk."

Chairman Lee who was fishing turned around and laughed.

"Hello, Chairman Lee. How have you been? Hi, Manager Gweon. It has been a while."

"Good to see you. You must have driven a long way from Seoul to here."

"I took the Dongbu Expressway. It didn't take long to get here from Seoul. The traffic was light since it is Sunday. There should be very heavy traffic on Saturday."

"Let's see how many fish you could catch today. Manager Jong-Suk Park seemed to be excited since President Gun-Ho Goo is here today. You look happy."

"Wasn't I happy before?"

Jong-Suk responded sulkily.

"You are always happy, of course. You just look happier today with President Goo's presence."

"We will be on the other side of the lake for our lure fishing as always."

"Sounds good."

"Manager Gweon, we will come here after an hour. I brought roasted chickens."

"Oh, you did? That's nice."

Manager Gweon smiled broadly.

Once Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk sat on the other side of the lake, they just did fishing without saying a word for a while.

"Are you getting any bite? I don't get anything today."

"Me too. Just keep trying. You will catch a big fish today. Huh? I got a bite!"

Jong-Suk pulled in a fish. It was a bass the size of a soju bottle. It was vigorously flapping.

"This fish came out from the water to say hello to you, bro."

An hour passed by. Gun-Ho still hadn't caught any fish. Jong-Suk, on the other hand, caught two fish already.

"I guess you have practiced fishing a lot during my absence."

"It's just luck. Luck helps make money too."

"You are right. Luck is one of the critical ingredients for a lot of things. I guess I was lucky too in making money."

"Bro, how come that luck thing doesn't come to me?"

"Haha. A person will get a very important opportunity three times in his lifetime. Just hang in there; you will have the opportunity to make money."

"That opportunity thing worked very well with you. It was an excellent decision that you gave up taking the government job exam."

"I didn't choose to give up on it. I was just not smart enough to keep trying."

"You wouldn't have been able to buy a condo if you worked as a government employee; it would take you forever to buy one with a government employee's salary unless you take some bribe or commit embezzlement. Your condo in TowerPalace, that's not going to happen to a government employee."

"Let's not talk about condos anymore. Let's just focus on fishing."

"Bro, didn't you tell Manager Gweon that you would come to their side after an hour?"

"It has been an hour already? Let's go then."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk went to the side where Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon were fishing, and they placed roasted chickens and Gimbab on the grass.

"Chairman Lee, please try this chicken."

"I am not a big fan of roasted chicken. I will just have some Gimbab."

The three men except Chairman Lee started devouring the roasted chicken with soju.

"Please take only one glass of soju since we all have to drive when we go home. One glass of soju will go away after two hours of fishing, so it should be okay."

141 Company in Rehabilitation 2 – PART 2

Chairman Lee stood up after taking a piece of Gimbab.

"How come you aren't having more, sir?"

"Oh, I just need to go to the bathroom. I might have a minor prostate problem since I'm aging. I need to go to the bathroom pretty often these days."

Chairman Lee went into the forest towards the mountain to pee. Manager Gweon said while looking at Chairman Lee disappearing into the forest.

"I was actually hitting on him when I saw his vacation home that is located not far from here."

"Is it large?"

"Yes, it is. The land is probably over 1,000 pyung. I started admiring him when I saw that vacation home."

"1,000 pyung? That large?"

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk pictured a large luxurious house like a castle on a 1,000 pyung land.

They couldn't ask Manager Gweon more about the vacation home because Chairman Lee came back.

"I can't satisfactorily pee anymore, maybe because of my old age. Why didn't you finish the chicken yet? You still have some left."

"We are working on it, sir."

"When I was young, I used to finish two chickens at once without any problem."

Chairman Lee picked up one piece of Gimbab and put it in his mouth.

Gun-Ho was thinking of bringing up the topic about Mulpasaneop to Chairman Lee when Chairman Lee asked him first about it.

"President Goo, you said you wanted to acquire a company that went broke. Any update on it?"

"Actually, I was going to talk to you about it. That company started its court receivership."

"Hmm, I see."

"Once the court protects the company from creditors so the company could continue their business, they might be able to get the business back on its feet again, right?"

"Do you think they will be able to do that?"

"With the court's help, they would be able to breathe and focus on their business again."

"You are reading an economic newspaper, right?"

"Yes, I read it every day."

"Then you see the advertisements about an M&A of a company that was doing the court receivership, right?"

"Yes, I saw those too."

"How come those companies want an M&A even though the court was protecting them from creditors?"

"Maybe its president is sick and tired of being harassed by creditors, or he probably wants to retire and have a relaxed life without running a company."

"No, that's not what's happening."

Chairman Lee shook his head.

"That's because selling the company is worth more than keeping the company."

Jong-Suk who was eating a chicken wing with a pinch of salt asked,

"What does that mean, sir"?

"President Gun-Ho Goo, why don't you explain to him?"

Gun-Ho was thinking of how he could put it in a way that Jong-Suk could easily understand when Chairman continued to talk.

"What was the name of the company that went broke?"

"It is Mulpasaneop, sir."

"That's right. Did you carefully look at their sales revenue? The company doesn't generate revenue any longer."

"I thought that was because of their debt."

Chairman Lee clicked his tongue.

"I told you to study accounting five years ago when we had met at this fishing site. What did you see on their financial statements? Mulpasaneop wouldn't be able to generate revenue even without paying for their debt. Their raw materials cost them too much. Their profitability is way too low."

"That means that even if I could acquire that company, I have to do something innovative to radically change the way they conduct their business."

"That's right. If you can't raise the sales, you have to lower the labor cost or find alternative raw materials to be competitive in the market."

"But that company has high accounts receivable. Doesn't that mean that they are still selling a lot of products but that they just haven't been paid for those products by their customers yet? So those accounts receivable is their asset, aren't they?"

"You are stupid! Don't you see those accounts receivable are not a real asset?"

"Ohhh, since they couldn't reduce their debt, they just let the accounts receivable sit there too, and they just accumulated over a period of time because debits

must equal credits."

"Now you are talking."

Jong-Suk said sulkily,

"I absolutely have no idea what you are talking about. I will just keep eating the chicken."

Manager Gweon added to what Jong-Suk said,

"Haha. I'm with you, Mr. Jong-Suk Lee. Let's just eat."

Chairman Lee smiled.

"That's one of the ways to live a happy life too. Sometimes, you just let things go that cause you a headache; that way, you could avoid painful matters in your life."

"Whew."

Gun-Ho, let out a deep sigh.

After having a cup of water, Chairman Lee asked Gun-Ho,

"What's the matter? You seriously want to acquire that company?"

"Even though I desperately want that company, if the president doesn't want to sell it, I wouldn't be able to have it, right?"

"You can make him sell the company then."

"I can do that?"

"You have to give him a reality check."

"A reality check?"

"Let him realize that the longer he owns the company the more he will lose."

Gun-Ho couldn't fully understand what Chairman Lee said.

"Listen, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo."

Chairman Lee called him Mr. Gun-Ho Good instead of President Goo this time. That sounded strangely friendlier.

"In order to make money, you have to be harsh sometimes. If you are soft-hearted, you can't make money."

"Where are you getting at?"

Jong-Juk was yawning; the conversation between Gun-Ho and Chairman Lee must have bored him. He then went to another fishing spot carrying his fishing gears. Manager Gweon also left the spot heading to his Genesis car. He said he wanted to take a nap there.

At the lake, Gun-Ho and Chairman Lee were left by themselves.

Chairman Lee continued to talk with a placid smile.

"When I was young, people used to tell me that I was a cruel man. I worked as a hard money lender at that time in Myeongdong Town. Whenever the merchants at Namdaemun Market couldn't pay me the loan interest on time, do you know what I did?"

"Did you scold them?"

"I once went to one of the merchants' home that was located on the top of a mountain in the Miari area, and took his household goods like a rice cooking pot."

"Ha."

"They all told me that I was a cold-blooded man. However, you have to remember this. When you desperately need money, there would be no one who would lend you money. Think of the days when you worked as a factory worker. When you really needed even just 100,000 won, you probably wouldn't have found anyone who you could borrow that money from."

"That... that's very true."

"When I heard that you made good money in investing in real estate in China, I smiled, because real estate investment requires seed money. And how could seed money be made in a short period of time? Especially when it was made by a person who was born to a poor family."

"Umm... that... that was..."

"You don't have to tell me. I know it wasn't made in a way that you feel proud of. I did that too."

Gun-Ho blushed. He was caught off guard.

"The economic ladder to climb up almost collapsed in Korea. If you are remorseful for the action you took in order to make the seed money, you can pay it back to society by helping others and doing the right thing as you live your life. I've tried it all my life even though I couldn't really live that way. I regret the way I've lived."

Gun-Ho swallowed his saliva without saying a word.

"You said you want to acquire Mulpasaneop, right?"

"Yes, I did."

"Then get into that company as an employee."

"Get a job at that company? I don't think they would hire me."

"They will. Ask them to give you a position like a vice president or managing director."

"What?"

"Don't talk with a bank or an accountant that handles the company's work."

Gun-Ho blushed again. He actually went and talked with Accountant Nak-Jong Lee who had been handling Mulpasaneop's financial matters.

"I... I actually met with their accountant once. I learned the fact that the company was in the process of court receivership from him."

"You don't have to ask for help from the attorneys, accountants, or bank branch managers around the company. In a capitalist society, the person who has money is the person who is ruling society. You don't ask those people for help, but you ask them to work for you like you rule over them."

"I haven't reached that level yet, sir."

"Don't be silly! You already have enough money to do it. That gives you great power to rule over them. You just don't realize it yet."

"What about getting a job in Mulpasaneop, which you mentioned earlier? What should I do to make it happen?"

"Go talk to the owner-president on your own."

"Would he meet with me? He doesn't even know me."

"He is cornered already. Once a company starts its court receivership, its president is not treated respectfully as he used to be. He is probably feeling lonely and depressed. If you go tell him that you are a hard money lender with substantial funds, he would welcome you."

"Do you really think so?"

"I'm certain. Do you know who will actually handle the company during the court receivership?"

"I saw two names on the court website."

Chairman Lee smiled again.

"One must be someone who was appointed by the court, and the other must be the owner-president. That's good. The power is currently moving from the court to the person who is appointed by the court. The power shift is happening right now. The president must be extremely lonely. Go talk to him directly; do not go through some third party to talk with him, but go directly to him by yourself."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho bit his lips as he made up his mind about his next move to acquire

Mulpasaneop.

"I feel sorry for him."

"Huh? Who are you talking about?"

"The owner-president. He lost control over his own company, and he is facing capital reduction. That would make him feel extremely lonely."

"What do you mean by facing capital reduction?"

"Once a company starts the court receivership, the court protects the company from creditors, and also the court reduces the owner-president's shares of the company like a penalty."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho thought that the world could be very cruel.

142 Company in Rehabilitation 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho decided to meet the president of Mulpasaneop on his own as Chairman Lee suggested. The name of Mulpasaneop's president was Se-young Oh. His name could be found on the Internet and also on the documents that Gun-Ho issued from a paid website that provided a company's information. His father worked as a factory manager in a big company in the old days when Korea had Chung-Hee Park as the president of the country, and then he opened his own business and ran it until he passed it on to his son, the Mulpasaneop's president.

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Mulpasaneop. He picked lunchtime to make a call to them around noon when most of their employees were out for lunch.

"Hi, I am calling from Daejeon District Court, may I talk to the accounting manager?"

"Our accounting manager is out for lunch right now."

"When do you expect him to come back to the office?"

"It will be around 1 pm."

"Oh, and what is the name of the accounting manager?"

"It's Min-Hwa Kim."

"Okay, thank you. I will call him later."

"Stupid folks! They tell everything if someone claims he is from the court."

Once it was 1 pm, Gun-Ho called Mulpasaneop again, and he asked for the accounting manager.

"I'd like to talk to Accounting Manager Min-Hwa Kim, please."

"This is her."

The accounting manager was a woman. She hadn't answered phone calls at the office until recently because the call could be from a creditor; however, now she knew the creditors wouldn't be able to call to press them to pay the debt because of the court order, so she answered the phone right away with her mind at ease.

"Hi. I am the president of GH non-bank financial institution. I'd like to meet with President Se-Young Oh. When would be a good time for me to come?"

"Excuse me? Are you asking to meet our president? Which non-bank financial institution did you just say?"

"It's GH non-bank financial institution."

"Give me one moment, please."

The accounting manager seemed to be a smart woman. Once she realized that the caller was a president of some non-bank financial institution, she went straight to the president to let him know.

After a while, the accounting manager came back, and asked,

"May I ask what this is in regards to?"

"I'd like to discuss something with the president."

The accounting manager went again to the president to let him know, and she came back after a while.

"The president said he would be in his office until 5 pm today."

"Thank you. I will be there by 3 pm then."

Gun-Ho drove his Land Rover heading to Asan City while singing Bohemian Rhapsody.

"It will take me about two hours to Yeongin Town, Asan City; that's where Mulpasaneop is located."

Once he arrived at Mulpasaneop's factory, Gun-Ho asked for the accounting manager.

"Are you the accounting manager? I'm the president of a non-bank financial institution; we just spoke on the phone earlier today."

The accounting manager seemed to be in her 40s. Gun-Ho looked like a rich man in her eyes because he was wearing a neat suit with an expensive tie. Gun-Ho usually didn't wear a watch, but he started wearing one—an expensive one—recently. Moreover, Gun-Ho had good manners and that gave a favorable first impression to the accounting manager.

"The president is expecting you. Please come with me."

When Gun-Ho entered the president's office, the president was reading a newspaper; it was a large office.

"Hello. I'm the president of GH non-bank institution. Nice to meet you."

"Please have a seat over here."

President Se-Young Oh was a bold man in his 60s.

The president showed Gun-Ho a seat at a conference table in his office.

"What made you come to my company today? Our company already started the process of court receivership."

"I am aware of that, sir. Even with the court receivership, I believe that you might still need funds, so I came to visit you quietly."

Gun-Ho gave the president his business card which said GH Development.

After looking at Gun-Ho's business card using his reading glasses, the president said,

"The business card said it is a real estate development company, not a non-bank financial institution."

"Our clients are companies who need a substantial amount of money in a short period of time and the transaction has to be done quietly. We don't advertise our business publicly. That's why I carry a business card like this. I hope you understand."

"Hmm. I see, but I can't borrow money from anyone now. Our company is not capable of paying a loan interest, and we are under the court's control right now."

"I know that."

"If you know that, then what are you suggesting?"

"I understand you borrowed money mostly from banks, but I am sure you also borrowed some money from people you know personally and used hard money as well."

"That's true."

"Since the court receivership started, you must not be able to pay the interest to those people."

The accounting manager came into the office with two cups of green tea.

"Let's have some tea first. So, you are saying that if I used hard money, you would lend me some funds? Without collateral?"

"Yes, I can, depending on the circumstances though."

"May I ask you the source of the money you would lend me? Please don't get me wrong, but you seem to be a bit too young to handle that sort of significant amount of money..."

"I am working for my boss, of course."

"Oh, I see. It would have been really nice if I met you before our company started the court receivership."

"It's still not too late."

"To be honest with you, I borrowed 300 million won from my younger sister before the court receivership started. I haven't been able to pay her the loan's interest. She saved that money to buy a home. She is asking for the principal, but the court isn't letting me."

"I can lend you money as it is your personal loan not to your business. I can take

your personal asset as collateral."

"Haha. I wish I have any personal assets left that I could use for a loan as collateral, but my home in Bangbae Town is already taken as collateral two times already."

"Did you say two times?"

"It was first secured for the loan from Kukmin Bank, and it was subsequently used three times more by our vendor when I couldn't pay for the raw materials we used."

"I admire you, sir. You used your personal property for the company's debt. Not many people would do that."

When Gun-Ho recognized the president's selfless action and said it to him, the president seemed to feel good about himself. Someone appreciated his care and sacrifice for his company after all.

"In running a company, I don't work for my personal interest."

"You are a true businessman, sir. I wish there was more businessman like you in this world."

The president who was feeling good and relaxed now became more cooperative in providing information to Gun-Ho with pleasure. Gun-Ho thought that sometimes reasonable buttering up was necessary and useful.

"How much is your home in Bangbae Town worth?"

"As far as I know, it's about 1.8 billion won since the real estate prices went up a lot recently. It's a 50 pyung condo. I raised all of my children in that condo."

"How much in total did you use to secure your current loan with the condo?"

The president asked for the accounting manager urgently, hoping he might be able to borrow additional money using the same condo as collateral.

"Manager Kim, You know the address of my condo in Bangbae Town, right? Do you have the real estate registration of that property? If you don't, please get one."

You can get it through the Internet in no time, right?"

"Okay, sir. I will do that."

143 Company in Rehabilitation 3 – PART 2

The accounting manager came back to the president's office after a while. She was carrying the real estate registration of the president's condo in Bangbae Town with her.

"Manager Kim, how much did we use for the loans with this condo? We already calculated that a few days ago."

"It's 1.2 billion won, sir."

The president handed the real estate registration to Gun-Ho hoping it would help Gun-Ho make a favorable decision for him.

"Look at this. The total amount secured for the loans with this condo is 1.2 billion won. Since the current market value of the condo is 1.8 billion won, there still is 400 million won left."

Gun-Ho closely looked at the real estate registration that the president just handed to him.

"If I lend you money, will you be able to pay the corresponding interest?"

"Whew"

The president let out a deep sigh in response to Gun-Ho's question.

"Since it would be my personal loan, I would have to pay the interest myself, but the court reduced my salary significantly."

"Also, you need to consider what you would do in the case where one of the secured creditors decided to put your condo for sale."

The president recoiled from the idea that he might lose his home.

"And what if unfortunate things happened and the condo would be sold for less

than 1.2 billion won at the auction?"

"That's not possible. There is a current fair market value."

Gun-Ho sipped his cup of green tea with a smile.

'As Chairman Lee mentioned, the person with money gets the power and controls the situation. When I worked for YS Tech in Dunpo Town years ago, Mulpasaneop was so great that I couldn't even think of getting close to it. And now, the president of Mulpasaneop is waiting for my favorable decision. This is happening not because I have highly respectful knowledge or character, but it is because I have money.'

As Gun-Ho kept smiling, the Mulpasaneop president was just looking up at the ceiling.

"This is all happening because of my son. If he didn't expand the business recklessly, none of these would have happened."

"Umm, sir, have you ever thought of selling your company?"

"I will have to if the court decides that selling the company is worth more than keeping it."

"Have you received the decision from the court yet?"

"I don't know. The accountant who was appointed by the court and other people from the court was doing something now, but they don't report to me. Maybe they are doing something behind my back. Who knows? Jackas*!"

"As far as I know the initial paperwork about whether the company should stay in business is done by the company. The documentation is about a plan on how a company could pay off its debt so it is included there how much the company would make next year, after three years, after five years and so on. The management in the sales department must have done all the work."

The president asked for the accounting manager again.

"Manager Kim, please see if Director Kim in the sales department is in his office. Tell him I need to see him now."

"Yes, sir."

After quite a while, the accounting manager came back to the president's office.

"Director Kim in the sales department is talking with the officer from the court right now."

"What the... I don't care who he is talking with. Just tell him to come and see me right now!"

The president seemed to be upset and yelled at the accounting manager.

After a moment, Director Kim entered the president's office. He was a tall man in his 50s.

"You are working on the documentation about whether the company should continue its business or whatever, right? Is it done?"

"I am working on making some changes on it per the court officer's request."

"What do they know about my company? Do they have any idea how a factory like this is conducting its business? F*ckers! Okay, you can go!"

Gun-Ho thought that many businessmen who were running a company seemed to be short-tempered.

After Director Kim from the sales department left the president's office, Gun-Ho continued to talk to the president.

"Even though the court determines that it is worth keeping the company's business, you can't use the company's money as you previously had done, before you pay off the debt."

"Hmm."

The president seemed to be displeased at the idea that Gun-Ho just said.

"Moreover, if the court determines it is better to sell the company rather than keeping it, your company will have to be sold. My boss buys companies that are under court receivership as well. If you are interested in selling your company,

please let me know any time. As to the loan to be secured by your condo, I will think about it and will let you know."

"Whew. Okay."

"I will take this real estate registration with me."

Gun-Ho went to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel close to Mulpasaneop, instead of heading to Seoul.

"Maybe I should stay here and enjoy the hot spring bath and spend the night here today."

Gun-Ho had a meal at a restaurant inside the hotel and soaked in a hot spring.

"I think it's important to be extremely careful about running a company. I learned my lesson today by looking at President Se-Young Oh. Who would even imagine that Mulpasaneop would end up like this? By the way, should I lend him 300 million won? Since he can't borrow money from anyone else but me, he will contact me sooner or later. Let's see what happens."

After bathing in the hot spring, Gun-Ho felt exhausted and fell asleep in the hotel.

The next morning, Gun-Ho called his office to Manager Kang from Onyang Hot Spring Hotel.

"I am in Onyang Town right now for business. I will return to Seoul this afternoon. If you need me until then, just give me a call."

"Okay, sir. I will let Ms. Ji-Young Jeong know as well."

Gun-Ho was driving to Seoul while humming when his phone started ringing. It was from a number he didn't recognize, so he was not going to take it. However, since it was a call to his personal cell phone, he answered the phone.

"Gun-Ho Goo? I'm Jae-Sik Moon. Remember me?"

"Jae-Sik Moon?"

"Yeah, we went to high school together."

"Oh, of course. How did you get my phone number?"

"Suk-Ho Lee gave it to me. I heard you are running a big business."

"Nah! It's just a small company. What about you? What are you doing for a living?"

"I used to do package delivery service and now I'm just unemployed. I'm calling to let you know that I made a book of the alumni directory of our high school. It includes all other year graduates as well."

"Oh, really? Nice work."

"However, it cost me a lot so I can't just send it to everyone for free, but I will have to charge 50,000 won for each person. I will send you my bank account number so you could send me the fee, and I will send you the directory book."

"Oh, sure. I will do that."

"Thank you. There are some friends who don't want to buy it. I will mail it to your home. Send me your home address when you are ready."

"Can you send it to my office instead? You did a good job."

"Thank you."

"You used to participate in the literature club in high school, right? And you were involved in making our high school newspapers as well."

"Yeah, it was fun. Well, thank you, Gun-Ho. I'm sorry if I bothered you in your busy time."

Gun-Ho thought of Jae-Sik Moon after getting off the phone with him.

"I can't clearly remember his face. He used to be a very active participant in the literature club when we were in high school, and he was doing a package delivery job? Of course, he wouldn't enjoy his job."

Gun-Ho received a text message from Jae-Sik Moon with his bank account

number. He also sent another message asking if Gun-Ho could help him send the directory book to their teacher from high school. He said that their teacher was just staying at home after his retirement, and it was hard to reach him to get the 50,000 won so it would be really nice if one of his high school friends could help him send the book to their teacher.

"I included the money for our teacher as well. Good Job, Jae-Sik. Thank you."

Gun-Ho sent Jae-Sik 100,000 won for himself and for their teacher.

144 Preparation for M&A 1 – PART 1

Byung-Chul Jo's father passed away, who was one of Gun-Ho's high school classmates. Won-Chul Jo—the president of WestFacing Club which was organized the last time when Gun-Ho's high school friends got altogether, contacted every member of the club to let them know the news. Won-Chul contacted Gun-Ho as well.

"The funeral hall is at the Gil Hospital in Incheon since Byung-Chul's parents were still living in that area."

"I see. I will come by tomorrow evening."

"I will be there tomorrow evening as well. I sent a text message to all of our friends to be there between 7 pm and 8 pm tomorrow. I will see you then."

"Okay. Byung-Chul's father was still young."

"I know. I was told that he had liver cancer. He was a retired high school teacher and was receiving good retirement pay. He was not even 70 years old when he passed away."

Gun-Ho sent a funeral flower wreath to the funeral hall with his company's name on—President of GH Development.

When Gun-Ho arrived at the funeral hall the next day, he saw several friends who were already drunk.

"Hey, Gun-Ho. Come on in."

Gun-Ho's friends now treated him with respect. They made a vulgar joke or talk to each other, but they didn't do it to Gun-Ho. Some friends even tried to butter Gun-Ho up.

"Did you send money to Jae-Sik too?"

"Jae-Sik? Jae-Sik Moon?"

"That as*hole swindled us. He told us that bullsh*t that he made an alumni directory book."

"What? That was a lie? So he didn't make an alumni directory book at all?"

"I knew he was lying, so I didn't send him any money."

"Ha."

"Gun-Ho Goo, you sent him money too, right?"

"Yeah, I did."

"How much did you send him?"

"100,000 won."

"What? Why 100,000 won?"

"He told me that he wanted to send one alumni book to our teacher too."

"Sh*t. That f*cker took our money and ran away."

"Do you know where he went?"

"How do I know? If I knew where he is, I would go twist his neck badly."

Gun-Ho felt somewhat sad about all these while drinking a glass of soju with a piece of Korean spring onion pancake. Gun-Ho thought that Jae-Sik must have desperately needed the money and it reminded him of his old days when he was having a hard time paying the interest of the sunshine loan and credit card bill.

"The friends he could successful deceive and take money from were about 30 to 40 people. The total money he took should be less than 2 million won. I hope that eased his hard life a bit."

Gun-Ho didn't blame Jae-Sik Moon. Gun-Ho thought he could understand the despair that Jae-Sik must have been feeling right now.

A few friends who arrived a bit late bowed to the deceased and then gathered around Gun-Ho.

"Hey, Gun-Ho."

"Good to see you, Gun-Ho."

Gun-Ho just kept drinking while thinking of Jae-Sik Moon's situation.

Gun-Ho stood up from his seat to go home and told his friends that he'd better leave now because he had to drive a long way to his home. Byung-Chul who lost his father came and talked to Gun-Ho before he was about to leave.

"Thank you, Gun-Ho for coming today."

Gun-Ho looked at Byung-Chul's face; he was wearing thick glasses. He seemed to be so slim; the work at the research center must be hard. His brother who looked just like Byung-Chul looked skinny as well.

Gun-Ho remembered Byung-Chul as the most brilliant student in high school. The principal used to praise him a lot for his good work in school and said he had a promising future. Byung-Chul was even ranked number one in the national mathematics competition at that time. However, Byung-Chul today looked shabby and insignificant; Gun-Ho couldn't figure out why.

Gun-Ho received a call from Mulpasaneop's president—Se-Young Oh.

"Can we meet?"

"Sure, I will come there as early as I can. I often go to the area because of business with other companies anyway."

"Oh, really? That's good. I will be waiting for you then."

When Gun-Ho arrived at Mulpasaneop, the accounting manager—Min-Hwa Kim greeted Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho gave her a box of cookies.

"Oh, what's this?"

"It's walnut cookies. I bought it on the way here."

"Haha. Thank you very much. The president is expecting you in his office."

When Gun-Ho opened the president's office door and entered, the president was

sitting in a chair with his head tilted to one side. He must have been dozing off. When he saw Gun-Ho, he greeted him with delight.

"Thank you for coming."

"Of course, I should come."

"My younger sister is blaming me and said that I am holding her life back. Can I borrow 200 million won from you? You can use my condo in Bangbae Town as collateral."

"With interest?"

"Yes, but I can't pay high interest though because I don't get paid much now. After the court receivership started, the court let me take only 3 million won per month for my living expenses."

"Okay, then I will lend you the money with bank interest, with one condition."

"One condition? What would that be?"

"Hire me as an employee at this company. I will be working only during the court receivership period."

"That..., that's not..."

"The officers appointed by the court will decide the fate of the company. Once they decide it is better to sell the company, they will revoke the court receivership."

"Hmm."

"If that happens, the company will possibly be sold off in pieces."

"Hey, look. This company is more than 30 years old. It won't collapse that easily."

"It's not just creditors that you have to worry about. Once the court receivership is revoked, all of the employees will leave the company because they know they will not get paid at all. The secured creditor will then start the sales process."

"Hmm."

"Once I start coming to this company as an employee, I want to begin to collect information to know about the character of debt, the state of current debt like outstanding balance, the assets, etc. That way, when you have to sell the company through an M&A, the process will be quick."

"Hmm."

The president was in a difficult position; he was just staring at the ceiling. If he said he wouldn't let Gun-Ho in the company then Gun-Ho would probably just leave. If that happens, then his sister won't get her 200 million won anytime soon.

"I will have to talk with the officers sent from the court about hiring you."

"Of course. I understand. I will meet with the officer on my own, and I assume that you agreed to hire me."

"I am not getting along with those officers, so I won't introduce you to them myself. If you join our company as an employee, I will welcome you. I have no reason to oppose to hire you. You will rather be helpful to me since you are very knowledgeable about monetary issues."

Gun-Ho knocked on the door of the officer's room, who was placed in Mulpasaneop by the court.

"Please come in."

Gun-Ho sat on a chair placed in front of the officer's desk.

"I am Gun-Ho Goo. I am running a non-bank financial institution."

As he introduced himself to the officer, he handed his business card to the officer.

"I've seen you coming in and out of the president's office lately. This company is in the process of the court receivership and it won't be able to borrow any money."

"I am not here to lend money. I am more interested in M&A."

"The examiners appointed by the court haven't finished the investigation yet."

"I believe they will eventually determine that it's not worth keeping the company since it doesn't generate enough sales revenue."

"We don't know yet. As I said, the investigation hasn't completed yet."

"You are aware that once it is decided that the company shouldn't continue the business, you need to start the sales process to a third party, right?"

"I am. I have worked as a court officer for a number of companies that applied for court receivership, and I also worked as a bank branch manager before."

145 Preparation for M&A 1 – PART 2

"The reason I talked with the president here is to ask him to hire me as an employee. I wanted to start my investigation early in collecting information to know the exact situation of the company, like how much debt it really has."

"Hmm. So you are interested in acquiring this company."

"That's right. I believe you probably want to sell the company to a third party as early as you can. That's what the court promotes too, right? If the company is sold even before the court receivership actually starts, you might get an incentive too, I believe."

"That's not a bad idea. What concerns me is that you need to take a position with a real task. We actually have a vacancy in a position that handles lawsuit related work. The person who used to work in the position quit the job; he said the work was too hard for him. Why don't you take the position and do your own investigation about the company and its debt while handling the company's lawsuit?"

"That's fine with me. I am willing to take any work that you give to me. I hope I could take though a position to a level as a managing director."

"That's not possible. In order to hire a person at a director level, we will need approval from the court."

"I see. Then, let's do this. Let's tell people within the company that the company hired a new managing director, and tell the court that the company hired a manager who would handle the lawsuit related work."

"Hmm."

The officer seemed to take some time to think about it, and said,

"Did the president agree to it? I mean about hiring you, President Gun-Ho Goo."

"Yes, he said okay."

"Well, let's do that then since the president agreed to it. Let me first talk with the president, and I will contact you."

Gun-Ho lent 200 million won to the Mulpasaneop's president and secured the loan with his condo in Bangbae Town. The president seemed to be satisfied when he received the money.

"My sister will be very happy. Thank you."

Gun-Ho came back to Seoul and had waited until he heard something from Mulpasaneop.

"Once I get into the company, I will have to handle their lawsuit job, but I have no idea what the work is about. What should I do? Oh, the officer manager—Se-Gil Lee from a law firm. I think I can ask him about the work."

The reason why Gun-Ho wanted to get into the Mulpasaneop as an employee was to grasp the actual state and condition of the company such as their actual current assets and debts; that way, he would be able to smoothly acquire the company without making a mistake when it came to the time for the M&A. Also, Gun-Ho wanted to make himself busy working at Mulpasaneop, so he could suppress his urge to sell his Kumho Chemical stock.

"I will be too busy to think about selling the Kumho Chemical stock. Let the stock sit there for quite a while, maybe until the coming winter."

Gun-Ho received a call from the court officer at Mulpasaneop.

"You can start your work here next Monday. As I previously promised, we will report to the court that we hired you as a manager who would hand the company's lawsuit related work. However, inside the company, we will announce that we hired a managing director, but that has to be done by the president, not me. Since I am the appointed officer by the court, I can't do it."

"I understand. Thank you."

"Since the company is officially hiring you, you will have to bring some papers like your resume, your resident registration, and your highest school diploma."

"No problem. I will do that."

"And the duration of the employment will be 6 months."

"That sounds good. I believe everything will be done by then."

Gun-Ho urgently called for Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong.

"I won't be in the office from tomorrow. I will be working as a managing director at a manufacturing company in Asan City."

"Huh? What about our company then?"

Gun-Ho's two employees' eyes widened.

"I could take the position in Asan City and work there for a while because I know you two will be in this office. You just keep working as you have done, and let me know when there is an important thing you think you need to report to me."

"What is going on, sir?"

"The company in Asan City is Mulpasaneop. They manufacture automobile parts. I actually want to make an M&A of that company, so I want to be inside the company in advance to find out more about the company."

"Are you acquiring a company? How big is that company? If it is a manufacturing company, their employees should be at least more than ten people."

"Their current employees are actually 250."

"250 people?"

Manager Kang and Ji-Young looked at each other in surprise.

Gun-Ho at first thought of finding a place to stay within the Asan City, and then he decided to lease a condo close to Cheonan-Asan Station for KTX (Korea Train Express); it was a 25 pyung condo.

"This is a newly constructed condo; it looks good. Since the KTX station is right there, it will take me only 30 minutes to go to Seoul, which is nice."

Gun-Ho went to Mulpasaneop to work on the following Monday.

There were 48 workers from the management department who were gathered for the morning meeting. Since it was a manufacturing company, the number of workers in the production was way higher than the number of the workers in the management. The president introduced Gun-Ho to the workers from the management.

"This is Gun-Ho Goo. He joined us today and he will be working as a managing director of our company. He will handle mostly lawsuit related jobs."

Gun-Ho came forward and gave a 90-degree bow to the workers. The workers clapped with a blank face. The president continued to talk,

"Managing Director Gun-Ho Goo graduated from Zhejiang University in China majoring in accounting, and he worked as the president of GH Development Company. Please welcome him as our team."

Gun-Ho bowed to the workers again.

Gun-Ho asked the accounting manager to give him the lawsuit files. There were 54 ongoing lawsuits. Gun-Ho quickly looked through the files.

"16 of them are about unpaid wages, and the rest of them are from creditors for unpaid loans."

Gun-Ho made a call to the office manager—Se-Gil Lee.

"Oh, President Gun-Ho Goo? I am back to my office in Seocho Town. Why don't we have lunch together today? I can get to the Gangnam station in 15 minutes on my slow foot."

"I am actually in Asan City today. I took a temporary position in a company that I want to make an M&A of."

"Oh, really?"

"If you have time today, can we meet at Seoul Station instead? I will buy you a tasty lunch. I have something to consult you about."

"That sounds good. I don't have any other schedule today anyway."

Gun-Ho put all the Mulpasaneop's lawsuit files into a briefcase and took a KTX train heading to Seoul. Once Gun-Ho arrived at the Seoul Station, he met with the office manager at the Café Pascucci that was located inside the train station.

"What are these?"

"These are lawsuit documents."

Gun-Ho put all the documents on the table and showed it to the office manager—Se-Gil Lee.

146 Preparation for M&A 2 – PART 1

The office manager from Hanbit Law Office—Se-Gil Lee seemed to be surprised when he looked at the papers that Gun-Ho showed him.

"Wow. These are a lot of papers. How many lawsuits do they currently have?"

"I believe it's 65 in total."

"This doesn't look good. They have way too many lawsuits."

He said while looking through the papers.

Gun-Ho looked at the office manager who was wearing a red t-shirt; his outfit for today was in a bright color overall. He seemed to be selective in choosing his outfit, but he didn't look elegant.

"Most of these are from the vendors who didn't receive the payments for their products, and 17 lawsuits are for unpaid wages."

"How many of them are issued payment order from the court?"

"There are 16."

"Once the court determines to revoke the court receivership, those companies with the court's payment order will start exercising their rights by bringing a sheriff's deputy."

"Really?"

"You probably want to negotiate with them before that happens. You both can agree on an installment payment plan. However, it wouldn't be easy though, because those companies must be pretty upset by now going through the process to get the payment order from the court."

"What happens if a sheriff's deputy gets involved?"

"They will start putting stickers on the properties that were to be seized. If they

put those stickers on the equipment in the factory and on the computers in the office, then the company would be forced to stop their business."

"Hmm."

"You don't have to act right away though since they can't do anything yet during the court receivership period. Until then, the companies with the court's payment order will closely monitor the company's move."

"Hmm."

"The rest of the papers are about the court decision on performance recommendation on wage claims and lawsuits on requesting the payment for the goods delivered. You need to submit an application for an objection to the court for these cases."

"What should I say on the application?"

"Tell them that the company is not doing well so you will pay in installments or something like that. Once you do that, the court will realize that the company and the claimant are in dispute so they will start court proceedings. Even though you wouldn't win the lawsuit, you will be able to buy some time. That way, you can pay later."

"Hmm."

"How do I do the objection thing?"

"I will email you, President Goo with a sample format for it."

"I am President Goo in Seoul; however, I am a managing director in the company that is in the process of the court receivership."

"A managing director? They can't hire anyone at a director level during the court receivership period."

"We told the court that they hired a manager instead of a managing director, and within the company, they address me as a managing director."

Office Manager Se-Gil Lee smiled.

"Good luck to you."

"How many lawsuits did we say earlier the company currently has on an unpaid wage?"

"It's 17 cases."

"If you can, later on, pay the wages to the workers first. The company didn't pay to its employees who already provided their labors to the company. That doesn't look good to the public, and the court doesn't like it either. Moreover, wage claims could cause a criminal case."

"Hmm."

"The president of Mulpasaneop could be prosecuted, separate from the civil lawsuit."

"Hmm."

Officer Manager Se-Gil Lee closed the file as if he no longer needed to look at the file.

"Do you happen to know the total amount of claims? The amount that is already reported to the court?"

"It seems to be a bit more than 70 billion won. According to their financial statements, they used to have about 50 billion won debt last year. It increased dramatically lately."

"So you want to acquire this company knowing that you will have to take over the debt as well?"

"Haha, I don't have that kind of money."

"If that company has a bright future, why don't you form a consortium with another company in acquiring Mulpasaneop?"

"I don't think Mulpasaneop has a bright future. I'm just in a phase reviewing their business right now."

"I see. Oh, by the way, I have to leave you earlier today; I have things I need to take care of at the Incheon District Court. I will have to take a rain check for the lunch you offered for today."

Office Manager Se-Gil Lee was standing up from his seat to leave. Gun-Ho quickly took out an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"I wanted to buy you lunch today, but since you are so busy I won't hold you. Please take this instead; it's not much."

"Hahaha. You don't have to do this, but thank you."

The office manager didn't even try to pretend to refuse to take the money for even a second, but he quickly took it and put it in his pocket.

Once Gun-Ho came back to Mulpasaneop, he categorized the lawsuit files and reported it to the court officer.

"There are currently 65 lawsuits, and the litigation value is 12 billion won."

"Hmm."

"17 of them are for unpaid wage claims. Once we receive payments from our customers for the products we delivered, I will pay for these wage claims first."

"Of course, you should do that."

Gun-Ho approached the accounting manager, took out a chocolate from his pocket, and gave it to her. The accounting manager who was working at her desk lifted her head and laughed.

"It seems like you are the busiest person in this company. You must be extremely busy preparing all the documents that we need to submit to the court."

"Whew. Don't get me started. I can't even ask someone for help because I have to do it by myself. It's killing me. I should have quit this job when the previous managing director had quit."

"You stayed here till late at night at 10 pm yesterday, right?"

"I think I will have to do it again today too."

"You have that numerous works you have to complete today too?"

"I need to make a report for the court on the company's cash flow and I have to attach the corresponding details in statements. Also, I will have to prepare the application to request payments for our wage since the day after tomorrow is our payday."

"Do you need to get approval from those two officers appointed by the court for any papers that will be submitted to the court?"

"That is really painful work too because they are not in their offices all the time. Sometimes I could get approval from the court officer, and then I figured the president was not in his office or the other way around. If that happens, I have to wait for one of them all day long. This is very inefficient. I don't understand why they had to appoint two court officers."

"I feel your pain."

"And the selfish sales director asked me to make some changes to our company's payment plan of the debts, which we will submit to the court."

"Did he tell you why he can't do it?"

"Well, he said he is not good with numbers."

"Hmm."

"The sales director must be very busy with other work. I heard that the court officer asked him to modify the payment plan because the anticipated revenue is way too low."

"Hmm."

"I was told that the anticipated revenue needs to be high, in order for the court examiner to determine that the company is worth being saved."

"Hmm, that makes sense."

"I am so glad that you joined our company."

"What is it so?"

"Since you take over the lawsuit matters, I don't have to worry about that part."

"I haven't done anything really yet."

"There is a rumor saying that you joined our company because of an M&A."

"Haha. There is a rumor like that?"

"Yeah, also, since you are so young, people say there has to be someone else—a big player—and you are here on behalf of that big player."

"Haha, really?"

"I hope someone very wealthy to buy this company. I am so sick and tired of this situation."

"How long have you been working for this company?"

"It has been exactly 18 years. I aged with this company and I feel like I didn't really achieve anything."

147 Preparation for M&A 2 – PART 2

There were four more workers in the accounting department in addition to the accounting manager, but they couldn't handle the work that the accounting manager was doing. They were not knowledgeable or experienced enough in the field to handle the work. The accounting manager was a smart woman who was good with numbers. Whenever she was asked a question about her work by the president or the court officer, she answered as if she was a computer.

Gun-Ho asked the accounting manager one more question.

"The total amount of claims that are reported to the court is 70 billion won, right?"

"Yes, it is 71,247,200,000 to be exact. The amount claimed for public interest among them is 12,264,000,000 won."

"The claims for public interest are something like tax?"

"Yes, it includes tax, unpaid Four Major Public Insurance, unpaid wages, etc."

"It is indeed a substantial amount of money."

"That's right. That's why we had suffered a lot by the creditors before the court receivership started."

When Gun-Ho came back to his desk, he started agonizing over whether it was a good idea to acquire this company because the company had a significant amount of debt which Gun-Ho was not sure if he could handle.

"It's 71.2 billion won. And the amount claimed for the public interest is 12.2 billion won."

Gun-Ho felt very exhausted, so he leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes.

After a moment, Gun-Ho heard a yelling sound from the court officer's room.

Gun-Ho and the accounting manager ran to the room. The court officer and

President Se-Young Oh were yelling at each other at the court officer's room.

"You listen to me very carefully. I understand that you are here because the court-appointed you. But, this is my company that I grew for 30 years."

"This company is not your personal asset, sir. The company has been maintained by the creditors' funds and their efforts as well; you can't just control the company in whatever way you like. You might be able to do it before, but you can't do that anymore. This company is under the court's control; it's under the court receivership. You need to look at reality."

"If I knew you would interfere with my business like this, I wouldn't even have applied for the court receivership. Everyone knows that the company invested in China, but you don't allow the business trip to China? That doesn't make any sense at all."

"The company in China is not part of this company. Then, we can't allow you to use this company's money to travel to China for that company's matter."

"What do you know about the factory business? You have worked in a small office like in a bank, doing some office job."

"Whatever you say, we can't allow you to use the company's funds as business expenses for the trip to China."

The president was trembling in anger.

Managing directors, directors, and managers came to the court officer's room when they heard the yelling sound, but none of them said a word. They couldn't take anyone's side.

At that moment, Gun-Ho stepped in. He talked to the president first.

"President Oh, let's go back to your office. Please calm down."

When the president came back to his office and sat at his desk, Gun-Ho quickly brought a cup of cold water to him.

"That as*hole came to my company and interfered with my business. He does that because he thinks the court has his back. Son of b*tch!"

"Haha, sir, I think he is a play-by-the-book kind of guy. Many government workers and bank workers are like that."

"You saw what he was doing, right? That young kid acted so rudely. He had no respect toward me and he doesn't give a sh*t to my 30 years work for this company. Sh*t!"

Once Gun-Ho made the president calm, he went to the court officer's room.

"How are you?"

"Sh*t! He is out of control."

The officer gulped down the water.

"You handled the situation very well."

"You think about it, Managing Director Goo. What did I do wrong? It doesn't matter what the president said, but the company in China is a legally totally different and separate company from this one."

"The president is an old man. I guess things were played differently in the old days."

"He wants to go to the company in China, which his son established. So what? He can't use this company's money to go to his son's company. I'm telling you this because I trust you, Managing Director Goo. I could see why this company had to come this far and start the court receivership."

Gun-Ho came back to his desk and leaned back in his chair with his eyes closed.

"This company is a mess. Maybe I should take my hands off this company. I have more than enough money to live my life without working. Why would I want to take this trouble?"

However, Gun-Ho really wanted this company. The company's sales revenue was over 70 billion won and it had 250 workers. It was a desirable company."

"The problem is their debt. They have the same amount of debt as its sales revenue—70 billion won."

When he was thinking about it, he received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim in China.

"Hey, what's going on? I heard you are working at a company in Asan City as a managing director."

"Yeah, it happened like that."

"According to Manager Kang, you want to make an M&A of that company? And that's why you got inside the company to grasp their situation?"

"That's right."

"You must be very busy."

"Oh, since you are there, let me ask you something."

"What is it?"

"There is a company called Mulpa Automotive in Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province."

"Automotive? It's an auto parts company?"

"That's right. It's not far from where you are. Can you go there and see if the company is still doing business or closed already."

"Is it related to the company you are working at as a managing director right now?"

"This company president's son used to run that company, and I heard it went broke already. I am not sure what really happened to that company."

"Okay. I will visit that company and will let you know."

"Okay, thank you."

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok around the time when he was about to leave to his home.

"Gun-Ho, I just came back from that company you told me earlier. They closed

the door already."

"Really? What about the equipment? They still have all the machines inside?"

"Yes, the factory seemed to have full equipment. They all look in a good and new condition, and big too. The problem is that the machines shouldn't be in a stopping position for a long time like that."

"What about people? No workers there?"

"I didn't see anybody. I talked with their caretaker though. He said the company hasn't paid the rent for the past 6 months and they haven't paid to the workers for a long while either. So the workers took over the factory."

"Hmm."

"The electricity is out because they didn't pay the bill. He said the representative of the workers comes to the factory about twice per week. I will meet him. I left my contact number with the caretaker for now."

"I want to know how much debt they have and how much payment to be paid by their customers. Do you think that a representative of the workers might know?"

"Well, let me talk with him first."

"How large is the factory roughly?"

"It seems to be about 2,500 pyung large. The factory is new too. It's a shame that that new factory is not working anymore."

"Okay, Min-Hyeok. Thank you. Just let me know after you meet with that representative."

148 Preparation for M&A 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho decided to meet the Mulpasaneop's creditors who were not a financial institution but vendors or subcontractors. He selected five of them that had the highest amount of money to receive from Mulpasaneop. The total amount of debt owed to these five creditors accounted for over 50% of the company's total debt.

"Two of them are vendors just like YS Tech and the other three companies are suppliers of raw materials."

Gun-Ho smiled at the fact that YS Tech was not one of the top five Mulpasaneop's creditors.

"I guess the Mulpasaneop's president paid YS Tech on time mostly since YS Tech's president is his brother-in-law. Mulpasaneop currently owed YS Tech only 300 million won."

Gun-Ho decided to meet with these three raw material suppliers first.

"This supplier is a huge company. Its president probably won't want to meet a person like me. I guess I'd better contact a person in an executive or management level."

Gun-Ho contacted a director of one of the raw material supplier companies.

"Hello, Mr. Director of H Group. I am a managing director of Mulpasaneop. Can we talk today?"

"Mulpasaneop? How things are going with the court receivership?"

"I will talk to you about it once I see you in person."

Gun-Ho went to H Group Chemical in Dangjin City. Its factory was enormously big. The company was known to be hard to get in. Getting a job there was extremely competitive. The competition to get a position as a college graduate was 100:1.

When Gun-Ho arrived at the main gate, he left his ID with the security guard and sign on the guest book so they could let him in. The staff showed Gun-Ho to a small meeting room in the building. Even though Mulpasaneop was a small company, compared to H Group Chemical, Gun-Ho was its managing director; the staff treated him with respect.

"Of course it is important to have a high position title in a company."

After quite a while, the director came to the meeting room with a manager.

"I sent too many raw materials to Mulpasaneop on credit, and that put me in a difficult position in this company."

The director who was short and obese started complaining as soon as he saw Gun-Ho in the meeting room.

"I apologize for that."

"I haven't seen you in Mulpasaneop before. When did you join the company?"

"Not long ago, but I've heard a lot about you. I am aware that you have been favorable to Mulpasaneop and helped us a lot."

"Well, as a matter of fact, I made my personal effort to supply raw materials to Mulpasaneop on credit. Since we don't get paid for the materials yet, I am in a very difficult position in this company. So, has the court receivership been approved?"

"They haven't decided it yet. I'd like to ask you a question, Mr. Director. If a company took over Mulpasaneop, will H Group Chemical still supply raw materials to them as it has always done before? It seems that your company has provided 2 billion won worth of materials to Mulpasaneop on a monthly basis."

"If they could pay us the 5 billion won they owed to us first, then yes, we would keep supplying materials to them."

"If they could pay you the 5 billion won in an installment payment, would you agree to the payment plan?"

"No, we can't take that deal."

"If you can't accept the installment payment plan, the potential buyer of Mulpasaneop would give up on acquiring the company. If that happens, do you think you can still receive the 5 billion won overdue payment from Mulpasaneop?"

"If the company is to be sold, they should have money to pay off their debts, right?"

Gun-Ho shook his head from side to side.

"Mulpasaneop's debt that was reported to the court is over 70 billion won."

"What? 70 billion won?"

"Even if the company is sold off in pieces, they wouldn't be able to pay even half of their debt. H Chemical would even hardly receive partial payment."

"Hmm."

"The best way to resolve it for both H Group and Mulpasaneop is that someone acquires Mulpasaneop and pays off the debt in an installment plan."

"And we are supposed to continuously supply raw materials to them?"

"That's right. For the overdue payment, the company will pay in installments; however, for the new raw materials supplied, we will pay right away the following month."

"Hmm."

"I came here today to ask you to withdraw the lawsuit you filed for the overdue payments because the buyer of Mulpasaneop will pay them in installments once he acquires the company."

"Hmm."

"The potential buyer wants to hear H Group's confirmation on it so he could make his decision to acquire the company."

"I can't withdraw the lawsuit. I am an employee of H Group, and I have to show

my superiors that I am making an effort to get the payments from Mulpasaneop. I think you should file an application for an objection to it. If you do so, the court will not issue a payment order for us right away."

"I see. Thank you."

"So are you saying there is someone who wants to acquire Mulpasaneop?"

"Well, you will see some changes to Mulpasaneop in the near future. I will talk to you then."

Gun-Ho visited all three raw material supplier companies and suggested them with the same deal. All of them hoped that the buyer would pay them the overdue payments in installments, and they would continuously supply the materials to Mulpasaneop. Next, Gun-Ho went to see the other creditors—the vendors. One of them was located in Yesan Town, Chungcheongnam Province.

"Yuseung Tech? Hi, May I talk to the president? I am the managing director of Mulpasaneop."

"Oh, you are the new managing director of Mulpasaneop, right? I actually was going to contact you. When are you going to pay us?"

"Are you aware that Mulpasaneop is in the court receivership process and all of the overdue payments are on hold pursuant to the court order?"

"I know that. But we are not a big company, and we need that money to conduct our business."

"I am on my way to your company. I will talk to you when I get there."

Yuseung Tech in Chungcheongnam Province didn't look that small. The factory was probably over 3,000 pyung large.

The president was waiting for Gun-Ho at the main entrance.

He looked like a meticulous man in his 50s. His factory was very neat in its own way.

"Our company barely functions without 1 billion won that was supposed to be

paid by Mulpasaneop."

Gun-Ho told him that once the new buyer decided to acquire Mulpasaneop, they would make the overdue payments according to an installment plan.

"How many workers do you have here?"

"We have 90 workers. Our sales revenue is a little over 12 billion won. We currently provide our products to two companies: Mulpasaneop and another one called Jaewon.

When Gun-Ho worked in a factory years ago, he couldn't even get a job in a company this big that had 90 workers. The factory that he used to work for was a small company with about 20 to 30 employees. The last company—YS Tech that he worked for was about the same size as Yuseung Tech.

"Okay, it's all done."

The meeting with the five major creditors of Mulpasaneop was successful.

"If I acquire Mulpasaneop, I wouldn't have to pay their debts all at once. I can pay them in installments."

149 Preparation for M&A 3 – PART 2

After meeting with the creditors, it was time to talk with major personnel inside Mulpasaneop. Gun-Ho made a call to the sales director, the production director, and the chief of the research center respectively to invite them for dinner.

"Hi, I am the new managing director—Gun-Ho Goo. I'd like to invite you to dinner. How about today?"

The sales manager was in his early 50s and both of the production director and the chief of the research center was in their late 50s. They gathered in a sashimi restaurant specialized in blowfish located at the downtown in Asan City.

Those three men were all trying to read Gun-Ho's face when they saw him in the restaurant. Even though Gun-Ho was a lot younger than them as he was in his 30s, they knew he was a very wealthy man. Being wealthy gave more power to a person than having a high education or being an older person.

"I know you are practically the major leading figures in Mulpasaneop. I should have made an occasion like this earlier."

"We heard a rumor that you might acquire Mulpasaneop, sir. Have you made a decision about it yet?"

"I have a question for you before I could answer your question. The court examiners requested to change the sales revenue plan in our payment plan. Is the high sales revenue achievable given to the Mulpasaneop's current situation?"

"It's possible if we develop A Motors' new product."

"Are we capable of doing that? Is our research center equipped with necessary personnel and technology?"

The chief research officer, the sales director, and the production director all laughed in response to Gun-Ho's question.

"We could just wish for it. Even though we are provided with the right researchers and equipment, it will take at least one year to develop the new

product. Also, once the product is developed, we will have to test it and that takes time too."

"Hmm."

"In order for the court to determine that it is worth to keep the company, our payment plan will need to include a well-designed sales plan that's based on the production development."

"So, you are saying it is possible that the court would approve the court receivership."

"Not necessarily. Those court examiners are very experienced in reviewing a company's payment plan and investigating relevant facts. There is no guarantee that they would approve the plan."

"The court examiners are DAS Accounting Firm in Daejeon City, right? Should I talk to them?"

"They won't talk to you, sir. During the investigation period, they can't meet with an individual from the company that they are examining."

"Is it illegal?"

"I am not sure whether there is a law prohibiting it; however, that's how they do things."

"Hmm."

"Our president's son was so careless and even reckless. He used to work as a vice president in Mulpasaneop for two years. He was a highly motivated and driven man. Maybe he picked the wrong time to expand the business. His factory in China produced too many defective products."

After they drank some liquor, the three major employees seemed to feel less nervous and more relaxed in being with the new managing director—Gun-Ho. The production director asked Gun-Ho,

"I'm not sure if it is okay to ask you this, sir..., but can I ask you who you are helping?"

"What do you mean by who am I helping?"

"I mean the person who actually wants to acquire the company?"

The sales director added to it.

"Right. I'm curious about it too."

"That..., I don't know yet. I know a few big players from Gangnam who are interested in acquiring a company. I don't see any specific sign from them yet."

"Is it an individual or a company?"

"I'm sorry. I can't answer that question right now."

After having another glass of liquor, Gun-Ho asked them,

"Where is the president's son now?"

"We don't know. We heard he took off after having a nasty argument with the president. Maybe he is in China. I'm not sure."

The production director said,

"I used to do some maintenance work for the equipments in that factory in China. I'm not sure what happened to those machines."

"Well, I'd like to tell you that please hang in there even though the company is going through a difficult time. We will hear good news in the near future."

The three major officers of Mulpasaneop looked more comfortable once they heard what Gun-Ho said.

Gun-Ho received a call from his mother.

"Are you already in bed?"

"No, I just came back from work. I was going to take a shower before going to bed."

"Your aunt's son—Jae-Woong—is getting married next Sunday."

"Really? Good for him."

"His wedding will be held at Cottium or Cottaum or whatever Wedding Hall close to Ganseogogori Station at noon. The name of the wedding hall is very strange."

"Okay, mom. I will be there."

"The bride is working at a post office. Is it a government job?"

"Yes, it is, mom."

"Your aunt keeps asking me why you don't get married. She said that you have money and you are old, so you shouldn't have any problem with getting married. Your aunt thinks his son is better than you."

"Did he find a home to start a family?"

"He rented a townhouse in Gyesan Town. Your aunt is so proud that her son saved 50 million won by working for the government in order to pay for the security deposit of that townhouse by himself."

"He saved a lot. He is a steady person."

"Maybe he is steady, but he surely doesn't know how to respect his elders. He doesn't even say hello to me whenever he sees me."

"Haha. He is just shy, mom."

"You are not dating anyone yet, son?"

"No, mom."

"If you can't find a girl on your own, I can find you one. You are getting old, son."

"Don't worry about me. I will take care of it."

"Whew. Okay, if you say so."

After getting off the phone with his mom, Gun-Ho gazed vacantly into space

while lying down on his bed. He was thinking of the dancing geisha—Mori Aikko.

"I should stop thinking about her. I don't know why I want to see her again so much."

He couldn't forget about Mori Aikko's clear eyes, her fair skin, and her full lips. Whenever he closed his eyes, he could see Mori Aikko smiling at him.

"I thought geishas always paint their faces with white makeup, but she was wearing light makeup that night, maybe because she was in the bar not in a stage. She looked like a true fairy."

Gun-Ho kept thinking about Mori Aikko and finally fell asleep after 2 am.

The next day, Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim.

"I met with the representative of Mulpa Automotive's workers."

"What did he say?"

"He said they haven't gotten paid for five months. The company used to have more than 100 workers, and now only twenty of them are left. And those twenty people work at someplace else right now because they have to make a living; they just come back occasionally for Mulpa Automotive's meetings."

"Really?"

"The machines are all seized for their unpaid wages, and he said that the workers keep the metal molds right now. Once they get paid, they will leave the factory. Leaving those machines without using them is certainly a waste."

"Hmm."

"Oh, and there was a Korean company next door, so I went there to talk to them. They said the young president of Mulpa Automotive comes to the factory from time to time."

"That means, he is in China, huh?"

"I don't know."

"Okay, Min-Hyeok. Thank you. When will you go back to Korea to visit?"

"I can't come right now. There are two contracts to finalize for Jinxi Industrial Park. Maybe I will come next month."

"With the two contracts that you are working on, how many companies moved in already?"

"Half full. The industrial park looks nice now."

"Okay. Keep up the good work, Min-Hyeok."

150 Business Acquisition 1 – PART 1

Fortunately, the claimed amount for unpaid wages had reduced since Gun-Ho joined Mulpasaneop. That was because the court officer made paying the unpaid wages the priority whenever the company's revenue was recognized. The court officer became very popular among the workers consequently.

"The court officer is the best. If the president was in charge of expenditure, he wouldn't have done the same. He would probably have paid for the overdue payment to those supplier companies."

"Well, we still need to get paid for the past three months though. However, at least I can pay some of my credit card bills, and my wife will not kick me out of our house."

"By the way, the new managing director... have you heard anything about him? He seems to be a rich guy. Did you see the car he is driving? He only wears high-end designer clothes."

"Is he from a wealthy family?"

"No, it seems like he is working with some big players from Gangnam."

"Someone told me that he used to work for YS Tech—one of our vendors."

"Maybe he is a crook. Don't you think?"

"Who knows? Maybe he is a corporate raider."

"His salary from our company is 2 million won, but he always goes out to have an expensive lunch every day. I've never seen him eating at our company cafeteria."

Gun-Ho thought that it was time to cast his fishing line.

He knocked on the president's office door and entered the office.

"One of my employees in China visited your son's factory the other day. The one

that is located in Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province."

"China? How are they doing?"

"The workers took over the factory and seized all equipment."

"I knew they would. F*ck!"

"Where is your son?"

"I have no idea."

"Are you going to sell the factory in China?"

"Who would want to buy that factory? That factory only has machines without workers."

"You can make money by selling that factory in China so we can use the proceeds to pay off some of our debts."

"I know that. It's just... there would be no one who would want to buy that factory."

"The payment we received this month from our customers was all used up to pay our workers for their overdue wages."

"Hmm. I still owe some hard money lenders, and they are still harassing me. That's urgent money that I need to pay. Whew."

"The workers now really like the court officer since he made the workers' overdue wages the priority."

"Don't talk to me about that sh*tty guy. I hate him."

"Why don't you go with me to China?"

"That court officer man wouldn't allow me to use my company's money to go to China."

"I will use my personal funds for the visit. I have a joint venture with China too."

"You have a joint venture there?"

"Yes. It's not a manufacturing company though. It's doing selling and managing an industrial park."

"Oh, really?"

"We can take Friday off and visit China during the weekend. We don't even have to tell the court about the trip."

"Hmm, okay then. Let's do that. I don't even want to look at that court officer's face to tell him about the trip."

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok.

"I'm coming to Suzhou City this Friday with the president of Mulpasaneop. Can you come to Pudong Airport in Shanghai to pick us up?"

"Oh, really? Of course. Why don't you stop by our industrial park to see the current development then?"

Gun-Ho met the president of Mulpasaneop at Incheon International Airport for their short trip to China. He was wearing a fedora hat. He was exuding the distinct vibe as the president of a company. His 30 something years of time as an owner of a company was somewhat reflected on him.

The flight landed on Pudong Airport.

The president looked up at the sky of Shanghai.

"It has been a while since I came here. When my company was doing well, I used to see managers and directors here who came to greet me and pick me up from the factory in Suzhou City. I don't see anyone here anymore."

Gun-Ho looked at the president's profile as he talked. He looked older than when he was in his office. His wrinkles seemed to be more noticeable.

"President Goo, over here!"

"Min-Hyeok, hey. This is the president of Mulpasaneop."

"Nice to meet you, sir. I am Min-Hyeok Kim."

Min-Hyeok showed his respect by bowing and handed him his business card. The president frowned while trying to read the business card. He probably needed reading glasses at his age.

"Nice to meet you, too."

"I brought a car to pick you up over there. Please come with me."

"Oh, you already reserved a taxi?"

"No, I brought my own car, sir."

Min-Hyeok took the president to his Audi that was freshly washed for this occasion.

Min-Hyeok then headed to Jinxi Industrial Park in Kunshan City.

A lot of huge factories were already settled in the industrial park.

"Oh, the industrial park is already filled with many factories."

"With the contracts made recently, the industrial park will be two-thirds full by the end of this year."

The president seemed to be impressed.

"So this industrial park is the joint venture that you, Managing Director Goo invested in, right?"

Min-Hyeok answered for Gun-Ho.

"That's right. President Gun-Ho Goo owns 50% of the joint venture. I am just an employee who is working for him."

"Hey, don't say that you work for me. We are business partners."

"Wow, I am impressed."

Min-Hyeok took Gun-Ho and the Mulpasaneop president to his office, and they

had Dragon Well tea. The president could see the workers and the heavy equipment moving busily here and there. He then nodded his head.

After walking out of Min-Hyeok's office, they headed to Mulpa Automotive. The president kept letting out a deep sigh in the car.

"You have been to your son's factory before, haven't you?"

"Of course. I've been there a few times."

The president cringed a bit when he saw the factory's door was closed and locked. They asked for the caretaker and asked him to open the door.

"You can't get in. You will need permission from the representative of the factory workers."

When the caretaker refused to open the door for them, Min-Hyeok raised his voice.

"Hey, look. I am running an industrial park in your neighboring city—Kunshan City. We just want to take a quick look at the inside of the factory. That's all."

When Min-Hyeok gave his business card to the factory caretaker, he hesitated.

Gun-Ho quickly slipped 100 Yuan into the caretaker's pocket.

"It won't take long."

Gun-Ho's 100 Yuan was way more effective than Min-Hyeok's business card. The caretaker opened the door to them right away.

"Please make it quick."

The president went into the factory and checked the machines that were all in a stopping position. He seemed to have mixed feelings as he petted the machines with his hand. Gun-Ho who was standing next to the president thought his hand looked sad.

Tears eventually welled up in the president's eyes. Gun-Ho wanted to cry too; he turned his head instead so he wouldn't look at the president's tears.

"My stupid son!"

"My stupid son!"

The president kept petting the machines as he cried. He seemed to think of his son as he was petting the son's machines.

In an effort to change the mood, Min-Hyeok said with a smile.

"You know, Chinkkweo Seon—the president of Jinxi Construction Company and the business partner invited us for dinner when he realized President Goo is here. He already reserved the restaurant—Hwadongchancheong."

"Oh, really? Let's go then! The president will like the food there too."

151 Business Acquisition 1 – PART 2

When Gun-Ho, the Mulpasaneop president, and Min-Hyeok arrived at the restaurant—Hwadongchancheong for the dinner invitation from Chinkkweo Seon—the president of Jinxi Construction Company, the Mulpasaneop president seemed to be astonished by the splendid and luxurious interior of the restaurant.

"Wow. Even though this is a restaurant in a province, its decoration is very impressive."

Gun-Ho asked the office manager who came with Min-Hyeok to order dishes that were appropriate for the elders, like seafood, for example, considering the president's age.

"Hey, President Goo!"

The president of Jinxi Construction Company— Chinkkweo Seon and the vice president of the joint venture— Kkangsin Kkao arrived at the restaurant. Gun-Ho introduced the Mulpasaneop president to them.

The Mulpasaneop president seemed to drink a lot that day in distress.

"Are you okay, sir? You seem to drink too much."

"I'm okay. I used to drink way more than this when I was young."

When they all drank enough liquor, Deputy Mayor Seukang Li came to the restaurant. He seemed to have drunk already somewhere else before he joined Gun-Ho.

"Hey, President Goo. Good to see you. I just came back from a meeting in Suzhou City; otherwise, I could have joined you earlier."

"Seukang Li, this is President Se-Young Oh. He is the president of a parts manufacturing company in Korea."

"Really?"

"Sir, this is Deputy Mayor of Kunshan City. He ran to the restaurant when he heard I was here. He is a good friend of mine."

"Deputy Mayor!?"

Once Deputy Mayor Li joined Gun-Ho's party, they ordered more liquor and the restaurant was again filled with the sound of their talking. Gun-Ho was laughing and talking with Deputy Mayor without help from an interpreter, and the Mulpasaneop president was looking at Gun-Ho enviously. Min-Hyeok was also talking with the president of Jinxi Construction Company on his own; his Chinese had improved a lot to the level that he no longer needed an interpreter to talk with a Chinese native speaker.

Gun-Ho interpreted for the Mulpasaneop president from time to time while talking with Deputy Mayor, out of concern that he might feel isolated because of the language barrier.

"I guess in order to have a business in China, speaking the Chinese language like you is a must. I was reckless in expanding my business to China without knowing the local language. I shouldn't blame my son for the failure I experienced here. I was the one who had suggested my son in the first place to go to China and do business."

The president drank more in regret.

"I guess it's time to let the next generation pick up things that my generation was doing. My generation is already old-fashioned in the business field. We need young people who could move with the times."

The next morning, Gun-Ho and the Mulpasaneop president got up late because of the heavy drinking they did last night. When Gun-Ho went down to the hotel lobby, Min-Hyeok was already there waiting for him.

"I guess I drank too much last night. Geez, it's already 8 o'clock. When did you arrive?"

"I arrived here an hour ago."

"An hour ago? Why didn't you wake me up?"

"I didn't want to. You overslept because your body needed it. Sleep is the best way to get your energy back."

"Oh, the president is coming. He seemed to just get up as well."

"Let's go to the hotel restaurant for breakfast."

"Are they still serving breakfast at this hour?"

"Breakfast is served until 9 am. I asked them about it already."

"Okay, then. You haven't had your breakfast yet right, Min-Hyeok?"

"No, I haven't yet."

The hotel restaurant still had some food left for breakfast. The food there was okay. All three men chose to eat porridge over rice.

When they arrived at Pudong Airport, Gun-Ho let Min-Hyeok go back to work. There was still plenty of time before boarding. Gun-Ho took the president to a lounge at the airport.

"Can we have the Chinese tea that we had yesterday? I really liked that tea."

Gun-Ho ordered Dragon Well tea.

The two men enjoyed the hot tea without saying a word. When Gun-Ho finished half a cup of his tea, he said,

"Umm, sir. I heard that the court examiners don't trust the sales director for the payment plan he submitted to them with the anticipated revenue of the company."

"I am actually with them."

"If so, the court receivership would be revoked, and those 16 creditors with the court payment order would start the sales process."

"Hmm."

"Moreover, the company currently has an outstanding balance of over 300

million won with Korea Electric Power Corporation ("KEPCO"). Once the court receivership is revoked, they would cut off the electricity supply to the company."

"Hmm."

"According to the factory caretaker, he had seen several companies' court receivership revocation, and once the revocation is decided, the workers would usually quit the job right away."

"Whew."

"Why don't you sell your company? Enjoy the rest of your life with your family, away from all these worries. Spend more time with your grandchildren and go on a trip with them."

"Who would want this company? Nothing much left here."

"Sir, you also need to think about the gravity of the unpaid wage claim. Too many workers haven't been paid for a long time. If you can't resolve it any time soon, you could be prosecuted."

"Do you think my employees would file a criminal complaint against me?"

"The department of labor would."

"Hmm."

"The workers actually would too. They wouldn't stay unpaid just for you, sir. They would turn their backs on you."

"Hmm."

"I will be frank with you, sir. I would give you 2 billion won for your retired life."

"2 billion won..."

The president looked up at the ceiling.

"2 billion is way too low. Even though the company's current assets appears to

be minimal, it has steady business and customers. I thought I could receive at least 5 billion won. The price gap between you and me seems to be too big."

"If you insist on your price, there is nothing I can do but giving up on Mulpasaneop. The reported debt to the court is over 70 billion won. In addition to 2 billion won I would give to you, I would have to spend a substantial amount of money on the company."

"This company is equipped with a quality management system; it has TS16949 and SQ (quality management system approved by Hyundai Automobile). Hyundai Automobile doesn't easily approve the system unless a company has a perfect quality management system."

"That's why I offered 2 billion won."

"That's way too low."

Silence filled the air for a moment.

"To be honest with you, sir, the investors who would invest in my business don't agree on acquiring Mulpasaneop. They all said there is nothing much left with this company."

"Hmm."

"Sir, sell your company when there is a buyer. Even though you post an advertisement for an M&A, investors wouldn't buy a company that has so many unpaid wage claims. If the company is KOSDAQ registered, then they might think about acquiring it because they could increase capital stock without consideration or issue convertible bonds; however, Mulpasaneop is not a KOSDAQ registered company, isn't it?"

"Hmm."

"If you can't do M&A, you would be criminally charged. Moreover, both of you and your son would become a person with a bad credit score."

"What do you mean by getting a bad credit score? The company is a separate entity from me as an individual, and the debt is the company's debt."

"It doesn't work that way in your case, sir. According to the record filed with the court, you and your son are the joint surety for Mulpasaneop for the amount of 3 billion won with Korea Credit Guarantee Fund. Do you think you can pay off 3 billion won?"

"That son of a b*tch Korea Credit Guarantee Fund!"

"Korea Credit Guarantee Fund is a sort of quasi-public entity, but they had to claim their money with the court to cover their as*. Your son is still young. You want to give your son another opportunity to stand on his feet again, don't you?"

"Hmm."

"When I was younger, I once couldn't pay off 12 million won. I didn't go through the individual rehabilitation process, but I went through the process to recover my credit score. I know what it's like to live with a bad credit score and live without money. The most valuable asset I have is such an experience, and the lesson I learned from it. Please set aside your emotions, and think about the future and the reality."

"I am so exhausted today. Let's talk more about it later."

The president stood up and walked toward the gate to board the plane; he was staggering.

152 Business Acquisition 2 – PART 1

The accounting manager of Mulpasaneop was having another hectic day in preparing documents to submit to the court.

Gun-Ho approached her with a smile.

"Manager Kim, is there anything I can help you with?"

"No, I'm good. Thank you."

"I can do a data entry job to the accounting program."

"What? You know how to use the accounting application?"

"I know how to use Douzone."

"Really?"

The accounting manager looked at Gun-Ho in surprise.

"I once used to work in the accounting department of a company."

"I see."

Manager Kim hesitated to ask Gun-Ho to do some work for her though.

"It's okay. I can handle them on my own for now. I will let you know if I need help."

"By the way, do you happen to know the president's son's phone number? I heard he used to work here as a vice president before he left for China."

The accounting manager was hesitant for a second, and then she looked at her note. She probably didn't save his number in her cell phone.

"Here it is. If he is using the same number, this has to be the one. But please don't tell anyone that you got this number from me."

Gun-Ho made a call to the president's son. Someone answered the phone after the phone was ringing for quite a while.

"Hak-Seon Oh?"

"Yes, this is he."

"My name is Gun-Ho Goo. I am working with President Se-Young Oh of Mulpasaneop. Is this a good time to talk?"

"Are you the new managing director by any chance?"

"Yes, I am."

"What is this in regards to?"

"I'd like to meet you in person. Where are you located now?"

"I am in Samsung Town. I'm helping my friend with his business now."

"I will come to Seoul then."

"Can you come to Bundang District instead? I am staying there. I can meet you there this evening. It's easier to drive from Asan City as well."

"No problem. I will come to Jeongja Town in Bundang then. Can we meet at Jeongja Station at 7 pm then?"

"Okay. I will see you there."

Gun-Ho met with Mulpasaneop president's son at a café in Jeongja Town, Bundang District.

The president's son seemed to be about two years younger than Gun-Ho. He looked like someone who had spent his childhood in an affluent family without any hardship in his life. They greeted each other.

"I've heard a new managing director joined Mulpasaneop. I expected to see someone a bit older than you though."

"You look very young yourself as well."

"How is the company?"

"The court examiners are still reviewing the company. We will soon see the outcome of their investigation."

"I see."

"I wanted to talk to you about the factory in China. I'd like to know how you want to handle it. Mulpasaneop invested over 10 billion won outside Korea and hasn't received anything in return yet."

"Whew."

The son let out a deep sigh before he responded to Gun-Ho's question.

"We should have sold the factory in China already so Mulpasaneop could get something out of it, but that didn't happen. Have you ever tried to sell it?"

"I did try to sell it, but the potential buyers all offered a ridiculously low price. I couldn't sell it for that price."

"I've visited the factory in Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province myself. The factory is now taken over by the workers. Are the machines the only assets of the company?"

"We have also some moulds and testing machines like a compressor."

"I'm sorry to tell you this, but the current assets of the company in China wouldn't be worth over 300 million won. Since the company is leasing the place, the company's actual assets would be the security deposit, machines, and some left-over raw materials."

The president's son seemed to feel thirsty; he ordered a coke and gulped it down.

"People are wondering what I did with Mulpasaneop's fund of 10 billion won. I didn't use all of it to buy machines. I had to pay for the raw materials to produce products as well."

"If you produced products with raw materials, you should have some sales revenue."

"We manufactured so many defective products, and some of our customers filed bankruptcy so we couldn't get paid from them."

"How much accounts receivable do you have?"

"About 100 million won. It has been seized because of the worker's unpaid wage claims."

"What about accounts payable? How much do you have then?"

"About 800 million won. The 400 million won of it is owed to our suppliers like the raw material supplier. The remaining 300 million won is for overdue wages. Once we pay and receive all these, we will be left with negative 700 million won."

"If someone wants to buy the factory, they will have to value the moulds and your customers. Your customers are all big companies."

"What if the customers want to change their vendors?"

"They wouldn't. Our customers are currently importing goods because our factory couldn't supply their necessary products. They would be happy to see them if we could produce products again."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho was thinking with his arms crossed and then asked,

"How much do you want to sell the factory for? Assuming there is a buyer who is interested in buying your factory."

"I'm thinking of 300 million won."

"If that potential buyer buys your company for 300 million won, he would have to take over negative 700 million won. So, that buyer would end up paying 1 billion won to buy your factory."

"Umm... Yes."

"If someone has 1 billion won, do you think that person would buy your

company with that money? Don't you think that person would do something more fun and lucrative rather than buying your troubling company that has a lot of issues?"

"Whew."

The president's son let out another deep sigh.

"You also need to consider this as well. If Mulpasaneop is sold off in pieces, it would put this factory at high risk. This factory has been receiving help and support from Mulpasaneop so far for free. You wouldn't even be able to ask for someone in Mulpasaneop to repair or maintain the machines in your factory. You sometimes used Mulpasaneop's raw materials when you had to, but that wouldn't be possible any longer."

The son drank up his glass of coke again.

The son said quietly,

"People think I wasted 10 billion recklessly on the business in China, but that was not what really happened. I've received raw materials from Mulpasaneop, and Mulpasaneop recorded the price of materials higher than their actual value. All of our machines in the factory were assembled with Mulpasaneop's used machines, but we recorded it like we purchased brand new machines."

"What do you think was the reason for Mulpasaneop's collapse?"

"They were not zealous enough to effectively conduct the business. There were way too many employees who were not necessary, but the company kept them all without restructuring the departments or personnel. Also, there were so many unnecessary high ranked executives who were receiving a high salary. They didn't re-evaluate the price of products for too long. The luck was not on their side either."

"It seems like someone wants to buy Mulpasaneop for 2 billion won."

The son laughed hollowly.

"A company with 70 billion won sales revenue is collapsing too easily."

"If your father doesn't sell the company now when there is a buyer, and if the court receivership is not approved, you and your father will become a person with a bad credit score."

"A person with a bad credit score?"

"You borrowed 3 billion won from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund with the company's name, right?"

"Yes, I remember that."

"You and your father are the joint surety for Mulpasaneop for that amount of 3 billion won personally with Korea Credit Guarantee Fund. If Mulpasaneop can't pay for it, Korea Credit Guarantee Fund will seize your personal assets and file a lawsuit against you."

The son screamed while grabbing his hair with his hands in despair.

153 Business Acquisition 2 – PART 2

"Once you become a person with a bad credit score, your life will become harder and very inconvenient. The government and our society recommend young people to start their own business, but they would become cruel to you once you earn a bad credit score."

"F*ckers! I didn't want to get involved in personally guaranteeing the repayment of Mulpasaneop's loan at that time, but they told me that I, as the son of the president and the vice president of Mulpasaneop had to jointly guarantee the loan with my father, so they could lend money to the company. It was a trap. F*ck!"

"Right. You shouldn't have done it. Joint surety is a very serious matter. If it goes wrong, your life could be ruined."

"What should I do?"

"Help your father to make the right decision. Tell him the price of 2 billion won is not a bad offer to sell the company."

"What about the factory in China?"

"I don't think you would be able to find anyone who would buy that factory. The company has way more to pay than to receive. You will have to give it to someone or close the factory."

"If I close the factory, the unpaid wage claims wouldn't cause any problems?"

"The overdue wages are treated seriously in China too as in Korea. If someone reports you, you wouldn't be able to step on the Chinese soil anymore. You can talk to the buyer who wants to buy Mulpasaneop to take the factory with Mulpasaneop as a package deal."

"You think that will work?"

"The factory in China could be used for Mulpasaneop's business, so the buyer of Mulpasaneop would probably be interested in taking it as well."

"I think you are the only person in Mulpasaneop with a practical perspective and insight into the reality that Mulpasaneop is now facing. There were many sons of b*tches at the management and executive level in Mulpasaneop. They are no longer with the company though. They always said yes to whatever my father said and didn't care about the company, and didn't really work. However, they all received a high salary of more than 100s of million won with a luxurious car that was allocated to them by the company. That was ridiculous and unacceptable."

"Are you living in a condo in Bundang District right now?"

"Yes, I am."

"Do you own that condo?"

"It's under my wife's name. I was worried about the creditors coming after my personal assets, so I put my wife's name instead of me, as the owner of the condo."

"That's good. Does your wife work?"

"She is running an English language institute. We went to the same college—Y University."

"Oh, I see. Well, I'd better get going now. I have to drive all the way down to Asan City."

Gun-Ho was preparing the application for an objection to submit to the court when he received a call from Min-Hyeok in China.

"I talked with the workers' representative of Mulpa Automotive yesterday. We had a drink together. He is a nice guy."

"Really? Did you learn anything new?"

"He said that most of the workers had already found another job, but ten workers are still there without work. These ten people are just waiting for the sales of the factory."

"That representative even had a product drawing of a product that was requested by the Korean B company that has a branch office in China."

"B Company? That's a big company."

"The product that B Company requested was a gasket. He said B Company would need the gaskets worth of 100 million won every month."

"Do you know how to read a product drawing?"

"Of course. I learned CAD before."

"Haha, really?"

"It's a shame if that factory has to close the business. Their machines are all in new condition. If someone acquires it and operates it well, it could be a very lucrative business."

"I see. Okay, Min-Hyeok. I will have to talk to you later. I have to prepare some documents that I need to submit to the court now."

"Okay. I will talk to you later then."

It was Gun-Ho's cousin—Jae-Woong's wedding day. Gun-Ho wore a suit neatly to attend his wedding.

"Let's not send him a congratulatory flower wreath this time. It won't look good to have a flower wreath at the wedding sent from a cousin who are not even married yet."

Gun-Ho arrived at the wedding place. His aunt was standing next to the groom—Jae-Woong. She was wearing a fancy traditional Korean dress with heavy make-up. Gun-Ho had never seen his aunt dressed up like this before. His overweight aunt and her also overweight son looked very alike.

"Oh, Gun-Ho! Oh, my gosh, I can't even recognize you. I heard you are making good money these days, and you look like a totally different person now. Money is good, huh? You should marry soon too."

"You must be very happy today since Jae-Woong is getting married."

Jae-Woong who was standing next to his mother had a shiny face; he probably put too much facial crème or something on his face.

"Jae-Woong, congratulations."

"Thank you, brother."

Gun-Ho was just going to stay there for a moment and was going to leave quickly after meeting the groom and his uncle.

"Let's skip the wedding reception. If I see other relatives, they would all ask me about my plan to marry or some other stuff. It could be very tiresome."

When Gun-Ho was thinking about how to avoid running into his other relatives, one of his relatives already saw him and said hello to him.

"Gun-Ho?"

It was a distant uncle who was about 60 years old. He was wearing a jacket and his face was red; he probably already started drinking.

"Hi, how are you?"

"Hey, why haven't you married yet? You are older than Jae-Wong, right?"

"Right."

"How old are you now?"

Gun-Ho thought that it would be an unfortunate day for him.

"35 years old."

"You are old enough to have a grandkid in the old days!"

Gun-Ho left his wedding gift money with the person at the reception desk, and then he quickly left the wedding hall.

Gun-Ho's sister called him.

"Hey, where are you? I don't see you anywhere."

"I just left. I have something I need to take care of right now."

"Really? Aunt said she saw you here, so mom and dad are looking for you."

"Can you tell them that I had to leave?"

"Okay. I actually expected to see you here, brother. It has been a while. Well, I will see you later then. Jeong-Ah misses you too."

"She must be big now."

"She actually received an award. She was selected for a children's choir. She will go to Seoul soon to sing with them. She brought a pamphlet of their performance in Seoul to give to you."

"Haha. Please tell her I congratulate her and I am proud of her. I will buy her a piano and send it home. It's a gift for Jeong-Ah."

"A piano?"

"I knew she is musically talented and I was going to buy her a piano anyway."

"You don't have to, Gun-Ho. You have done so many things for us already. I don't want to impose anymore."

"Don't say that, sister. Well, I have to go. I will talk to you later."

After getting off the phone with his sister, Gun-Ho thought,

'She is taking care of my parents, so I don't have to worry about them. She deserves everything I give to her.'

Gun-Ho felt good and drove his Land Rover to Asan City while humming.

154 Business Acquisition 3 – PART 1

The president of Mulpasaneop was very upset when he received an order to appear by the prosecution.

"Managing Director Goo, I received this letter; can you take a look? Why does the prosecution want to see me?"

"I suppose it's because of the overdue wage claims."

"Overdue wage claims? Are you saying one of my workers filed a complaint against me for the wage?"

"The local office of the Department of Labor probably did so. They have the right to do it."

"What would happen if I don't appear?"

"If you don't appear intentionally knowing that you received the appearance notice, you could get arrested. I recommend you going there voluntarily."

"They could arrest me once I go there, right?"

"Haha. They wouldn't do that right away. They would probably ask you to settle."

"Settle?"

"Yes, they want you to settle with the overdue wage claimants."

"What if we don't reach an agreement? It takes money to settle."

"If you can't settle, they would start the court proceedings."

"I will get arrested then?"

"Haha. I don't know. Whether to arrest you or not is up to the court, I guess."

The president eventually went to the prosecutor's office; he certainly didn't look happy.

The court officer was looking outside the window when the president went out heading to the prosecutor's office. He asked Gun-Ho,

"Where is the president going?"

"He received an order to appear in the prosecutor's office."

"It must be for the overdue wages. Stubborn old man!"

The court officer was quietly sneering.

"Managing Director Goo, what did I tell you earlier? I told you that we should pay off the overdue wages first among everything else, right? The president was furious when he saw me planning to pay for the overdue wages first; he insisted that we had to pay to the raw material supplier first. Look at how his life turned out at his old age."

The president came back to the company after 4 pm that day. He looked very exhausted, and he tossed a document in front of Gun-Ho.

"Sons of b*tches! They used to work for me, and I am the one who gave them the jobs so they could make their living. And this is how they pay me. Just because they haven't gotten paid for a few months, they filed a criminal complaint against me?! Sons of b*tches!"

Gun-Ho picked up the document that the president tossed and read it. About 20 workers filed the complaint together against the president.

"I don't know what to say, sir."

Gun-Ho felt like it was almost time to acquire Mulpasaneop.

"I hope that this doesn't become anyone's misfortune."

Gun-Ho was thinking with his eyes closed.

"The capital of this company has become about only 500 million won due to the

punitive reduction. The president practically has no funds to take out from the company. The price of 2 billion won that I suggested him is actually a good offer. He is just being very stubborn. Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town told me that business owners think differently from a person like him who has played with money. A company is like a child to those business owners so it means more than money to them. I guess President Se-Young Oh needs more time to let his company go. It seems that he is in the process of changing his mind. Let's give him some more time.'

Gun-Ho went to the court officer.

"I offered 2 billion won for the company to the president."

The court officer was surprised and asked Gun-Ho,

"What did he say?"

"He said he would think about it."

"I think it is a generous offer. I would take it if I were him. He has no idea what it's like to live with a bad credit score."

"If I pay 2 billion won, do I get the company right away?"

"No, since this company is under court receivership, the acquisition is done by increasing capital stock. The capital stock of this company is 500 million won, and you add 2 billion won to it—and then you become the controlling shareholder right away."

"Hmm."

"If the payment plan submitted by the company is determined to be difficult to achieve, I will have to start sales proceeding to a third party with the court's approval."

"Hmm."

"The acquisition applicant—you, Managing Director Goo needs to give me your application to acquire this company. Then, I will select another examiner."

"An examiner?"

"Yes, someone who will review the accounting records and legal matters because the procedure has to be fair to everyone."

"Who is going to be the examiner?"

"I know someone who is running an accounting firm, but I don't want people to be suspicious about the selection of the examiner. I think the accounting firm that has been handling this company's financial matters is good too. The firm's name is Anchang Accountant Office."

"Hmm, there could be multiple acquisition applicants."

"That's possible. However, one of the important factors in selecting the final acquiror is the acquiror's business experience and will to take over the company, so I believe you are the right person for it. Moreover, I don't think there would be anyone who would pay that much to buy this company. You will have to show that you have the cash to acquire the company though. Be loaded with cash."

"Okay, I will do that."

Gun-Ho decided to sell all of his Kumho Chemical stock in order to get the necessary cash to buy Mulpasaneop.

"I've been so busy that I didn't even have the chance to open my stock account. It was worth 90 billion won two months ago."

When Gun-Ho opened his stock account, he was shocked by the number he saw.

"225 billion won!"

Gun-Ho couldn't breathe. The price of Kumho Chemical stock increased by 2.5 times and Gun-Ho's stock was now worth 225 billion won.

Gun-Ho still couldn't believe it.

"God is helping me!"

Gun-Ho went outside to get some fresh air. He took a deep breath.

"I will not waste even a single penny of this money that was given to me by God!"

Because of the enormous amount of money that his stock was worth, it took him more than a month to sell off his stock.

While Gun-Ho was selling his stock, the branch manager of the stock brokerage company called Gun-Ho several times, but he didn't pick up the phone. Gun-Ho, at first, transferred 10 billion won to his bank account, which he would use when he acquires Mulpasaneop. With 225 billion won in hand, he could easily acquire a larger company than Mulpasaneop, but he didn't.

"I'm going to buy Mulpasaneop, and then I will grow it and make it a large KOSDAQ registered firm."

This was Gun-Ho's intention with Mulpasaneop.

During the month when Gun-Ho was selling his Kumho Chemical stock, the court examiners were almost done with their investigation and review. The court officer often came to Gun-Ho and told him how things went.

"It seems like the court examiners will determine that the company is not capable of achieving their payment goal as they indicated in their payment plan. I'd like to know about your next move, Managing Director Goo. You haven't talked to me about your plan or intention lately."

The president seemed to be anxious about his company's future and also his future as well.

"Is your offer of 2 billion won acquisition still valid? The investors behind you haven't changed their minds, right?"

Gun-Ho didn't pay attention to them and focused on selling his stock.

The court officer called for Gun-Ho again.

"The court examiners will submit their opinion with their investigation records to the court soon. The court will revoke the court receivership right away. We don't have much time."

155 Business Acquisition 3 – PART 2

The upper-level management of Mulpasaneop was anxious as well.

"Managing Director Goo wants to acquire the company with his investors' funds, but I heard that the president is not cooperative. If the company is sold off in pieces, he will lose everything. Why is he making things difficult?"

"Maybe the president wants to sink with his company. If he wants to do that, he'd better do it by himself. He is now dragging everyone down with him."

The head of the labor union went to the president and tried to persuade him too.

Gun-Ho determined that it was time.

He went to the president.

"Do you have any good news, Managing Director Goo?"

The president seemed anxious.

"I will submit my application to acquire the company to the court officer today."

"What is your offer?"

"I offer 2 billion won in a method of increasing capital stock. Since the company is still under court receivership, the court officer will use the money to pay the company's debts in the order of priority."

"They will have to pay for my hard money loan first."

"The court officer will pay for the amount claimed for public interest."

"What about me? I won't get anything then?"

"I will take your capital shares of 500 million won and will give you additional funds so you could get 2 billion won."

"Thank you, Managing Director Goo. I have one more favor to ask you."

"What is it?"

"My condo in Bangbae Town is being used as collateral to secure several loans that were used for the company's debts, mostly to the raw material suppliers. Can you pay for these loans first?"

"Hmm."

"I know there is a priority order in distributing to creditors; however, this is my personal asset. I could get evicted from my home."

"I admire you, sir. Not everyone would use their personal assets to pay for their company's debts. I will do what I can do to make those loans the priority in paying off the debts."

"Thank you so much, Managing Director Goo."

Gun-Ho gave a call to the president's son as well.

"My application to acquire Mulpasaneop has been submitted to the court by the court officer."

"I see. Thank you for your work and effort, sir."

"I think you did a great job."

"Huh? Me? I didn't really do anything."

"You played a major role in getting the product drawing from B Company when you were in China."

"Oh, that. Yes. I even knelt down to my friend who was my senior when we were in college and he was working for B Company, in order to get that product drawing. However, it became useless now. All of the product drawing and machines are seized by the workers."

"I will give you 100 million won, and I will take over Mulpa Automotive in China."

"Huh? 100 million won?"

The Mulpasaneop president's son didn't expect an offer of 100 million won. It seemed that he suffered enough to let go of his factory as soon as he could.

"If you give me 100 million won, I will hand it over to you without any issue. The company's business is very simple with only a few major customers and vendors, so the process to take over the company should be very simple."

"Can you go to China? If you get there, a person with the name, Min-Hyeok Kim will come and see you. He is the president of Jinxi Industrial Park in Kunshan City. You can start the process to sell your company with him."

"With the industrial park?"

"That industrial park is my joint venture. I invested in that joint venture and their Korean co-venturer is me."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho could see the president's son's surprising face even over the phone.

The court officer selected Anchang Accountant Office as the examiner to proceed with the sales of Mulpasaneop to a third party. Anchang Accountant Office had been handling Mulpasaneop's financial matters until the court receivership. Accountant Nak-Jong Lee from Anchang Accountant Office came to the company.

"I'm Nak-Jong Lee. I've been handling financial matters of Mulpasaneop for a long time."

"The court receivership will end soon and there is an applicant who wants to acquire Mulpasaneop. Once that person acquires the company, can you come again to Mulpasaneop?"

"Of course. I will do my best to perform my duty."

"We have a strong candidate to acquire the company, but we want the acquisition process to be performed through the neutral examiner, to look fair. We selected Anchang Accountant Office where you work for and already made a contract

with its headquarters in Seoul."

"Oh, I see. Who is the strong candidate to buy this company?"

"He is coming over here. He is the managing director of this company now; however, once he acquires the company he would become the owner-president."

"Hi, I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Accountant Nak-Jong Lee stared at Gun-Ho.

"You look familiar, sir."

"I actually went to your office for consultation the other day. And you didn't like to talk to me at that time."

"Oh, I remember now. It was not like that, sir."

"Haha, I'm just joking. I look forward to working with you."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to Accountant Nak-Jong Lee for a handshake, and the accountant gave him a 90-degree bow.

The court officer added with a smile.

"This man is supported with more than enough funds. I was astonished when I saw the acquisition application. His bank statement shows an enormous amount of cash."

Gun-Ho thought,

'He is surprised by looking at only 10 billion won in my bank account. They will faint once they learn that I have 210 billion won in cash.'

After Accountant Nak-Jong Lee left the company, Gun-Ho and the court officer had a tea.

"Once the court receivership ends here, what are you going to do?"

"I will apply to the court again for another work as a court officer."

"Is it easy to get the work that way?"

"I have extensive experience in this field, so the court trusts me. However, so many people want to do this job lately."

"The court officer work is usually done by a person who used to work as a branch manager of a bank?"

"Not necessarily. People who used to work as an auditor of a company, or an accountant, or a tax accountant do this job as well. I've seen people who used to run an insurance company or some financial institution too."

"Hmm."

"Why are you asking those?"

"Don't you want to stay in a company, rather than moving from one company to another as a court officer? I want you to work as an auditor here."

"Huh? An auditor in Mulpasaneop?"

"You now know well about Mulpasaneop, and I do like the way you handle things."

"If you offer me the job, I will take it with my pleasure."

"I can't pay you much though. However, I will give you more than you are currently making."

"Thank you."

"I decided to acquire Mulpa Automotive in China too."

"Huh? The factory in China?"

"Yes, I offered 100 million won for that company."

"Do you have anyone in mind to run that company?"

"Yes, I do."

"That's good."

"Please record the Mulpasaneop's investment funds of 10 billion won that was invested in China as a loss on disposal of investment assets."

"Okay. That will make the Mulpasaneop's financial statements less complicated."

For some time, the court officer who was in his 50s—and used to be a branch manager of a bank, treated Gun-Ho with respect. The power was shifting towards Gun-Ho slowly.

156 Business Acquisition 4 – PART 1

Gun-Ho made a call to Min-Hyeok in China.

"Min-Hyeok, I am taking over Mulpa Automotive in China."

"What? Mulpa Automotive?"

"Yes. Why don't you run that company?"

"What about the industrial park here?"

"Let's take our hands off the industrial park. Managing the industrial park is no fun."

"That's true, but this is just so sudden. I've never expected this."

"You said that the industrial park is almost half full, right?"

"As of today, two-thirds of the park is full."

"The security deposit we have received from the companies so far must accumulate a lot."

"I believe it must be more than 1.7 billion won."

"Why don't you meet with the president of Jinxi Construction Company?"

"And what do I tell him?"

"Tell him that we are acquiring a company in Suzhou City and that we are thinking of leaving the joint venture."

"What if he said no? Then what should we do about Mulpa Automotive?"

"Well, we will then have to find someone else who could run Mulpa Automotive; maybe post a job opening on WorkNet."

"That factory... I want to run it."

"Why? Are you bored with the joint venture?"

"In fact, even though I have a job title as the president and driving an Audi here, I feel like I'm just a puppet here."

"Haha, you think so?"

"All those Chinese people do the actual running of the company. All I do is just sign the report they show to me."

"I see."

"But I learned a lot by working here. I now understand the business system in China, and how they operate. That's nice."

"Really? Well, since you are the president, you must oversee the entire system and had the chance to observe their conducting business at that level. That makes sense."

"Okay. I will talk to the president of Jinxi Construction Company, and will let you know how it goes."

"Sounds good."

Two days later, Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok.

"I talked to the president of Jinxi Construction. I mentioned our intention to leave the joint venture. It seems that he liked it. He seemed to be really glad to hear it."

"Really?"

"I guess they don't feel comfortable running the company while I am there."

"That's understandable."

"They actually applied to increase their capital stock without consideration to the department of construction of the city."

"They did? How much will they increase?"

"He said 20 %"

"Hmm, that's not much."

"Why do they increase the capital stock? They don't have any plan to invest anywhere."

"They want to justify their asking for us to leave."

"It is for a justification?"

"The joint venture's capital is 3 million dollars, right?"

"That's right."

"How much will the capital be after they increase it by 20%? It will be 3.6 million dollars, right?"

"Right."

"With 3.6 million dollars, how much can they give to us? 1.8 million dollars, right? Our initial amount of investment was 1.5 million dollars, and they need to let us make some money through the investment in the joint venture, right? I thought they would increase the capital stock by at least 30%."

"Oh, I got it!"

"They will contact us soon. Let's wait and hear what they say."

"What about Mulpa Automotive?"

"We don't have to run the factory right after we acquire it. Let's take some time. You said you had dinner with the representative of the workers, right? Get along with him, and ask him to gather the workers who used to work for Mulpa Automotive."

"Okay."

"Don't forget that we get not only the machines but also the moulds. Some of the

moulds are not owned by Mulpa Automotive but by some vendors."

"Got it."

"Don't rush. We need to quit the joint venture first before we could actually run the Mulpa Automotive factory."

Anchang Accountant Office started the sales process of Mulpasaneop; however, there was no one but Gun-Ho who wanted to acquire Mulpasaneop. The sales price of the company was relatively low; however, the acquirer had to take over the enormous amount of debt as well. Two companies made some inquiries about buying the company and then gave up once they learned the exact amount of the company's debt. Once the president received 2 billion won from Gun-Ho, he stopped coming to the company anymore. The court issued a decision that it was ending the court receivership because Mulpasaneop was sold to a third party.

"Congratulations. You are now the president of Mulpasaneop."

The auditor who used to be the court officer during the court receivership came to Gun-Ho's office with a draft of the first board meeting minutes.

Gun-Ho read the draft of the board meeting minutes and chuckled.

"The entire board directors attended and elected Gun-Ho Goo unanimously as the president of Mulpasaneop."

Gun-Ho was using the president's office. He changed the office's entire interior with bright color and replaced everything with luxurious items.

When the accounting manager entered the office, she was surprised.

"Wow. This room used to be very depressing. Now it's so bright and fresh."

Gun-Ho replaced the frame that had old Chinese characters with a vibrant oil painting. Gun-Ho's tastes in decorating were reflected through his office.

The auditor insisted that they had to have an inauguration ceremony for the new president—Gun-Ho. So the entire workers gathered in the assembly hall and started the ceremony.

On the day of the inauguration, Gun-Ho became deeply emotional. He wanted to have a factory like this for a long time. Gun-Ho finally made his dream come true. He now had a large factory with 250 employees and with sales revenue of 70 billion won.

"They placed a banner there too."

In the assembly hall, a banner was hanging; it said, "The inauguration of our new president." Gun-Ho was aware that he took over this company with an enormous amount of debt, but he decided to pay it off gradually as he ran the company. He once thought about paying off the debt all at once with his cash—210 billion won in his stock account.

"Why do we have this many flower wreaths here?"

The factory manager ran to Gun-Ho and explained,

"These are from our vendors and customers. Twenty of them are from raw material suppliers."

"It's such a waste."

When Gun-Ho stepped in the assembly hall, every single one of the 250 workers stood up and clapped.

Gun-Ho was about to start his inauguration speech.

The old lady workers from the production department started whispering.

"I didn't know that our new president is such a young man."

"He acquired this company with the funds from the investors behind him."

"That's more like it. He is way too young to have such money."

"I don't care who runs this company. I just need to get paid on time."

"We received three-month overdue wage because of the court officer. We have three more months of unpaid wage left."

"That court officer decided to stay with our company; he is now our auditor."

"What does an auditor do?"

Gun-Ho started talking,

"I know you have been through a hard time with Mulpasaneop because of the company's financial crisis. You will never experience such hardship with this company anymore. I value talented and hard workers. I will absolutely compensate any of you who contribute to our company. On the other hand, I won't tolerate anyone who discourages our hard work, and who spends time without working at this company."

Someone started clapping and it eventually made everyone in the hall clap. Gun-Ho didn't want to make a long speech at his inauguration.

"I will provide a better work environment for you, and if the company makes more money, I will share it with you all. Please forget about how you have worked so far. We will now start a more effective and more efficient way of working to increase our productivity."

The workers were clapping, and the upper management level personnel started introducing themselves. The only new person there was the auditor and all other personnel was the same people who had been working for Mulpasaneop for years.

157 Business Acquisition 4 – PART 2

After the inauguration ceremony ended, Gun-Ho visited all of the Mulpasaneop's vendors accompanied by the sales director. There were not many vendors though; there were about ten of them. Four of the vendors were big companies, and Gun-Ho couldn't directly meet with their presidents; he instead, met with someone in charge.

The president of one of the Mulpasaneop's customers was President Se-Young Oh's friend. Even though that company was a big company, the president wanted to meet with Gun-Ho; it was very unusual. Usually, the president of a big company didn't directly meet with its vendors or customers' president if they were not from a big company.

"I've heard a lot about you from President Se-Young Oh. He highly spoke about you, so I wanted to see you in person."

"Thank you, sir. I am new in this field, and I don't know much about the business yet."

"No, no. Don't say that. That's not true. Even though I am running this big company as the president, I am just an employee who gets paid a salary on a monthly basis, but you are the owner-president of your company. I look forward to working with you."

"I will do my best, sir."

"As long as you produce quality products without a defect, we will definitely place orders for your new products."

As soon as the president said that he was interested in ordering, the sales director told the president right away.

"Sir, the last time you told us that you would order BH5604 from us, that didn't happen. You actually ordered it from somewhere else. It seems like you will be ordering more of the same product; can you make the order from us?"

"Really? Director Park has been with Mulpasaneop for a long time, right? You will have to assist well the new president—Gun-Ho Goo. As to the product, why don't you send me a sample? I will review it."

Once they returned to the car, the sales director started making complaints.

"The factory manager has a lot of issues. He doesn't effectively handle the workers in the production department. Our factory is making so many defective products. That factory manager has been working with our previous president for 40 years, and I guess he is too old. He sometimes does things I don't understand at all."

"Hmm, is that so?"

Gun-Ho decided to observe the factory manager for a while.

When it came to the factory matters, Gun-Ho thought of his friend, Jong-Suk Park who was working at a factory. He made a call to him.

"Hey, MacGyver Park! What are you doing now?"

"Hey, bro! I was about to leave to do some welding."

"Really? How much do you get paid from your current employer?"

"You suddenly called me now, and you are asking about my salary? Well, since I am the team leader, I get paid almost 3 million won."

"Jong-Suk, come to Asan City. I will provide you with OneRoomTel too."

"What are you talking about?"

"I just acquired a company. I will give you a managerial position. A manager in this company gets paid more than 4 million won."

"Get out of here, man."

"You, jackas* don't believe me, huh? You said your company has 40 employees, right?"

"It's actually 45 workers."

"Whatever. My company has 250 employees. Pack your stuff and move here!"

"I don't know."

"Have I ever lied to you before? And the factory manager here is an old man who will have to retire soon. So you will have a promising future with this company."

"The machines I am using here and the machines in your factory might not be the same since they probably have different specification. I'm not sure if I know how to operate those machines in your company."

"You are a quick learner, bro. You will learn how to operate the machines in the blink of an eye. Come and join me!"

"I will get off work early tomorrow and will stop by there. I will have to see it first before making any decision."

"Sounds good. I will buy you a tasty dinner."

Min-Hyeok called Gun-Ho and told him that the joint venture would increase their capital stock.

"The city's construction department approved it. They approved for the joint venture to increase the capital stock by 15% without consideration. Once it is done, the joint venture will then return our investment funds of 1,725,000 dollars."

"So we are being paid 225,000 dollars for our hard work so far. That's not much."

"Do you want me to talk to them about it?"

"That's okay. Leave it. I started that joint venture because of my friend—Deputy Mayor Seukang Li. He will hook us up with another good business opportunity later. At least we didn't lose any money, which is good. We made 225,000 dollars after all."

"They said that they will send the funds to your bank account."

"Okay. Once we receive that fund, move to Ohyeon, Suzhou City right away. Get a condo there; as long as the rent does not exceed 5,000 Yuan, you can get any condo you want."

"Okay. I will call you once I move to Suzhou City."

Gun-Ho received a call from Deputy Mayor Seukang Li.

"I heard you are leaving the joint venture."

"Yeah, it happened that way. From now on, the work that the joint venture will have to focus on is to manage the industrial park, so it would be more efficient for one company to manage it rather than two companies doing it together through a joint venture."

"I'm sorry that we couldn't increase more of your capital stock without consideration. I couldn't be flexible there because the government could only get involved in a limited way."

"That's okay. At least I made money and didn't lose money, so that's okay."

"I've heard you will have a business in Ohyeon."

"That's right. Ohyeon is within your city—Suzhou City so I might need your help later for my new business."

"I heard from President Min-Hyeok Kim that you are taking over an auto parts company."

"Right. It's manufacturing auto parts and selling to car manufacturers."

Seukang Li told Gun-Ho how sorry he was several times before he hung up the phone. It seemed that he was conscious about the 15,000 dollars he received from Jien Wang last time as a commission. Gun-Ho was getting 225,000 dollars as he quit the joint venture, and if he subtracted the 15,000 dollars then he would still end up making 210,000 dollars. Gun-Ho didn't make much by participating in this joint venture.

However, Gun-Ho didn't take it that way.

"It was an absolute success."

At first, he didn't lose any money and Seukang Li now felt that he owed Gun-Ho, which was really good. Gun-Ho knew Seukang Li would do something very helpful to him in return in the future. Second, Gun-Ho now had a valuable friend and worker—Min-Hyeok Kim. He had grown a lot while he was working in China. So he was more than capable of running Mulpa Automotive on his own.

"Min-Hyeok, I helped you to fly by putting wings under your arms. How much further you could fly is totally up to you now. Fly further and higher, my friend."

158 Business Expansion 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho invested an additional amount of 3 billion won to Mulpasaneop after acquiring the company. It was not for increasing capital stock, but it was more like the company borrowed money from its president for a short period of time. Once the company got back on track, Gun-Ho would be able to get his money back easily.

'I gave 2 billion won to the president when I acquired this company, and I put an additional 3 billion won as I lent it to the company. So I used a total of 5 billion won to Mulpasaneop so far, and I won't spend any more money even a penny to this company. I will pay the existing debt with the company's revenue as I run the company.'

Gun-Ho called for the auditor.

"Let's pay off the overdue wages first, and use the remaining funds to pay the raw material suppliers."

"Yes, sir."

"As to the raw materials, don't pay for the outstanding balance to the suppliers just yet, but pay for the new materials we are getting from them now. And pay them on time."

"Yes, sir. As long as they receive the payments for the materials they currently supply, they won't ask to be paid for the overdue payments right away."

"Mulpasaneop pays on time to suppliers ever since its new president joined the company."

The rumors started spreading in the field.

Jong-Suk Park came to Asan City from Yangju City, Gyeonggi Province to visit Gun-Ho's factory. When he looked at the factory, he was astonished.

"Wow, it is a big factory."

Jong-Suk had to sign on the visitor book at the main gate and receive a visitor's pass in order to enter the factory.

"I can't believe this is Gun-Ho bro's. This is huge."

Once Jong-Suk arrived at the management department, he could see a lot of office workers in uniform.

"Hi, I came here to see the president."

"May I tell who's here?"

"I am his close friend."

"Did you make an appointment with him?"

"Yes, I did."

"Okay, please give me one moment."

After quite a while, the staff came back and took Jong-Suk to the president's office. Gun-Ho was reading a newspaper at the conference table that was situated in the middle of the large president's office.

"Hey, Jong-Suk. Come and have a seat here with me."

"Bro, congratulations. It feels kind of difficult to even call you bro."

"What? I have to be your brother because I can't be your sister, man."

"No, I mean... We seem to have a big gap in our social positions now."

"Don't be silly. Do you want coffee? Or green tea?"

Gun-Ho picked up the interphone and asked for tea.

"Please bring us two cups of green tea."

"Okay, sir."

Jong-Suk could hear a friendly voice of a woman over the phone.

Jong-Suk was thinking what to say, and then he just drank his green tea.

"Did you bring your luggage?"

"My luggage? Oh, no bro. I just came here today to see the factory."

"What do you think?"

"It's way more awesome than I expected. You are a mysterious man, bro."

"You kept silly talking today. What's the matter with you?"

Gun-Ho picked up the interphone again.

"Please let the general affairs manager in."

After a moment, a middle-aged man entered the room. He looked like he was in his mid-40s and he was wearing a tie.

"Why don't you show this man here around the factory and introduce him to the factory manager. He will be working with us starting tomorrow as a production manager."

"Yes, sir."

The general affairs manager gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho who was a lot younger than him.

"Umm..."

When Jong-Suk hesitated, Gun-Ho frowned.

"Just go see the factory!"

When Jong-Suk went to the factory, he could see injection molding machines and extruder machines that were running vigorously while making loud noises.

Jong-Suk's eyes widened as he saw the production field.

"Wow. This is amazing. There were lots of machines I've never handled before. Are they all hydraulic press machines?"

Jong-Suk was intrigued by the machines and the production field. He checked the machines and observed the workers closely in the field.

The factory manager was outside the factory talking with an electrical inspector. The general affairs manager approached the factory manager and bowed to him. The factory manager was at the managing director level, and he was in his late 50s.

"Sir, this is Mr. Jong-Suk Park. He will join us as a production manager."

Jong-Suk bowed to the factory manager.

"Production manager? Did you bring your resume?"

"I didn't bring it today, sir, but I will bring it tomorrow."

"Where did you work before coming to our company?"

Jong-Suk hesitated for a moment. The factory he was working for was a small factory; he was just a team leader there. However, he would now be taking a production manager position in Mulpasaneop.

"I am in Yangju City right now. I have been working with a repair and maintenance team rather than in a production team."

"You will be good at fixing the machines then. Do you know how to read drawings? What about calculating production cost?"

Jong-Suk was hesitant. As the factory manager mentioned about some kind of production cost thing, Jong-Suk thought this wouldn't be an easy job for him.

"I will learn."

"You also need to know how to read a recipe and a simple chemical equation. By the way, you look very young. How old are you?"

"I am 33."

"Can you handle the work as a production manager? Well, you should be capable since the president recommended you. I look forward to working with you."

The factory manager extended his hand for a handshake.

After the factory tour, Jong-Suk came back to Gun-Ho's office.

"Did you see the factory? Did you talk to the factory manager?"

"I did. Whew. I am worried. I'm not sure if I can handle this job. All those production assistant managers and team leaders look a lot older than me."

"Don't worry! It's okay. Do you think I am the president because I am older than all of them?"

"They know you recommended me to this position. If I screw up, they will blame you. I don't want to cause you any trouble."

"Believe in yourself, bro. You are the MacGyver Park. I know you will do great. That factory manager will have to retire soon. While he is here, learn from him as much as you can."

"I can't call you brother here, right?"

"Huh? You can still call me brother when we are alone, and you can address me as President when we go outside this office. If you didn't bring your luggage today, pack your stuff and move here tomorrow. Get a OneRoomTel in the Asan City area. For the employment papers, ask the general affairs manager on your way out."

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok in China.

"I heard Jong-Suk just joined Mulpasaneop."

"Yeah. He is having a hard time now while learning new things in the production field."

"I'm sure he will do just fine. He was not good at studying, but he is very observant and a really smart guy."

"I know he will do well. He doesn't have much experience in the production field, but I know he is very good at maintaining and fixing stuff."

"Jong-Suk... oh, maybe I should address him as Manager Park from now. Once Manager Park gets familiar with his work there, I will ask him to look at the machines at our factory in China. I see some problems with some machines here since they were sitting here for too long."

"Okay. I will send him there soon."

"Oh, and I was told by the Jinxi Construction Company that they are done with the paperwork to end the joint venture, and they will send our fund tomorrow. So, please check your bank account after 3 pm tomorrow."

"Okay. I won't touch that fund though. Min-Hyeok, see how much you would need to operate Mulpa Automotive. I need to know the number so I could prepare the money."

"Okay, I will. Once the fund for the joint venture is verified, I will move to Ohyeon where our Mulpa Automotive factory is at right away. I already found a condo there; it's 17 pyung large and big enough for myself."

"17 pyung? Why didn't you get one with 25 pyung? You are the president of that company, remember?"

"Nah. It's not necessary. It would be a waste. That condo is a luxurious one, so its monthly rent is 3,500 Yuan."

"You will have to return your Audi to the joint venture, right? Once you get to Ohyeon, get a long-term rental car—Audi, okay?"

"Thank you."

"And don't forget to hire a chauffeur. Don't drive on your own. If you as a foreigner get involved in a car accident in China, they will rip you off."

"Got it. Thank you."

159 Business Expansion 1 – PART 2

"When you work in the joint venture, we had to talk with the Chinese co-venturer to determine your salary. Since our Mulpa Automotive is an independent company, we will have to determine the amount of your salary. How much do you want to get?"

"My salary? I'm good with the same amount as I earn with the joint venture."

"How much are you making now with the joint venture? You are getting 1.5 million won from Seoul, and 6,000 something Yuan in China, right?"

"I think it's more than enough for me since I haven't really done anything in the joint venture."

"Once you start working at Mulpa Automotive in China, I can no longer pay you 1.5 million won from Seoul. Instead, I will pay you 20,000 Yuan in China (about 3.6 million won) and will add a stock option."

"Stock option?"

"If you as the president work hard, and the factory is doing well, you will have the option to buy the company shares."

"Hmm."

"The stock option would be 5% of the capital."

"What does that mean?"

"Say, the company generated a profit of 1 billion won at the end of the year. Then, you can either get the right to purchase the stock or get a profit-sharing. 5% of 1 billion won would be 50 million won. If the profit is 2 billion won, you will get 100 million won. What do you think?"

"That would be great."

"Many startups offer it to their employees like this."

"Hmm."

"I will send you the annual salary agreement with stock option. Just send it back to me with your signature on."

"Thank you. I really appreciate it."

Min-Hyeok's voice was shaking; he seemed to be deeply moved by Gun-Ho's thoughtfulness and care.

Gun-Ho received a call from Manager Kang from GH Development in Seoul.

"Sir, it's Manager Kang. I just wanted to let you know that everything is good here. The company is doing well too."

"I appreciate that, Manager Kang. I can focus on business here because of you, Manager Kang. Having you there gives me real comfort."

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong often asks me when you will come to the office. We start worrying since you have been away from our office for a long time now."

"Haha, there is nothing to worry about. We talk like this pretty often. I regularly check the company bank account to see if the rent is coming in without any problem from OneRoomTels. So, don't worry about anything. I am monitoring the business of GH Development as well."

"When are you coming back to Seoul, sir?"

"It won't be soon. If you miss me that much, let's have lunch together today."

"Huh? Lunch today?"

"If you don't have any schedule today, why don't you come to Asan City with Ms. Ji-Young Jeong? You can take the express bus at Nambu Terminal heading to Asan City. It will take about 1.5 hours to get here. I will come to the express bus terminal to pick you up."

"Umm, sure, sir. We will do that. We can have a tour of the factory too."

Gun-Ho sent the general affairs manager to the express bus terminal to pick up

his employees of GH Development, instead of going there himself because one of Mulpasaneop's major clients wanted to see Gun-Ho. It was a big company—S Company, and their new vice president was visiting their subcontractors including Mulpasaneop.

The general affairs manager arrived at the express bus terminal, and he could easily recognize Manager Kang and Ji-Young. Most people at the express bus terminal in Asan City were old people and young students, so Manager Kang and Ji-Young certainly stood out.

"Are you Manager Kang?"

"Yes, I am."

"Hi, nice to meet you. I'm the general affairs manager of Mulpasaneop."

"Oh, I see. Where is the president?"

"He couldn't make it. He had to meet with a client, and he sent me here instead."

The general affairs manager gave his business card to Manager Kang and Ji-Young. Manager Kang and Ji-Young also handed their business card to the general affairs manager.

"I like your business card. It's very pretty. Is GH Development a real estate development company?"

"Yes, it is. We mostly do rental property business."

"How are you related to the president?"

"I'm sorry? Oh, President Goo is the president of GH Development."

"Oh, really?"

The general affairs manager didn't seem to know about that, and he looked surprised.

When Manager Kang and Ji-Young saw the factory, they couldn't close their mouths.

"So President Gun-Ho Goo owns this factory?"

"It seems like it."

"Wow. It's amazing. There is a huge building, and I see so many workers in uniform. I guess it is really a big company."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young were surprised. They talked to each other quietly as if they were mosquitos.

The general affairs manager took Manager Kang and Ji-Young to a meeting room. It seemed that Gun-Ho was still with the client. They could hear laughing from the president's office.

Gun-Ho was overly chatty with the vice president of S Company.

"Even the smart people who graduated from top universities cannot easily get a job in your S Company. I sincerely appreciate our previous president—Se-Young Oh for doing business with S Company. Considering that Mulpasaneop is a small company, it is a great opportunity for us to work with S Company."

"I've known President Se-Young Oh since I was a manager. His stubbornness is very well known. He sometimes refused to provide the products to us just because the production cost was not right. Once they increase the number of products and supply to us, it would have been good, right?"

"It seems like we both started working with our new position at the same date. I guess this meant something. Can I call you brother?"

"Brother? I think I am old enough to be your uncle."

Everyone in the room laughed.

"No way. You even look like a younger brother."

Everyone in the room laughed again. Gun-Ho was surprised by his own joke; he knew he was reclusive, but he didn't know he could be chatty like that.

"Sir, what do you think about our factory? We are well equipped with facilities and good labor force. We can produce more products. Why don't you give us a

present since you are here."

The vice president of S Company asked their director.

"Who is going to supply AM083 assembly products?"

"We haven't placed the order for the product yet, sir. They all said the production cost is too high, and they will have to import some ingredients from Japan. We talked with Silwon Company and ChemiTech."

"Hmm, they said they can't get the raw material from Japan, right?"

"Yes, sir. That raw material is all used up within Japan, and they don't have more to export."

"It's a urethane-related product, and it has to be a Dyeon product."

Gun-Ho was surprised when he heard the name—Dyeon.

"Give it to us. I know the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan office. Richard Amiel is my friend."

Everyone in the room was all astonished; especially the Mulpasaneop's sales director's jaw dropped in amazement.

160 Business Expansion 2 – PART 1

The vice president of S Company laughed loudly and said,

"Okay, we will send you the product drawing. Send us a sample product accordingly. Please make sure that the test report must show the name of Lymondell Dyeon's product for raw materials."

"Of course, I will make sure of it. What about the moulds?"

"It is an extrusion mould. You can make it here while referring to the product drawing; it won't cost you much."

"How many do you think you will need?"

"Once we decide to place an order from your company, we will make orders worth more than 1 billion won per month since they will be used for our new product. Am I right, Director Park?"

The vice president asked the director who came with him.

"Yes, it is, sir."

Gun-Ho was thinking,

'Oh, my gosh. This is going to be great. We can increase our sales revenue significantly. If we sell our products to them, which is worth 1 billion won on a monthly basis, it would add 12 billion won to our annual sales revenue. Mulpasaneop currently generates 70 billion won per year, and we will make 82 billion won if we get that contract with S Company. If we get this business from them, let's try to manufacture the product without hiring more workers. I believe we can handle it with our current workforce. '

The vice president stood up from his seat to leave.

"Well, we'd better get going now. We have other companies that we need to visit today. I believe you, President Goo will be a good business partner with our S Company. You are young, passionate and driven. I like that, and I look forward

to working with you."

The vice president offered his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"It's almost lunchtime, sir. Why don't you join us for lunch today?"

"Thank you for asking, President Goo; however, we have a rather very busy schedule today. We need to stop by Pyeongtaek City and Ansan City. I'll take a rain check."

The S Company's vice president patted Gun-Ho's back with a smile.

Once the president of S Company left Gun-Ho's office, the general affairs manager entered the room.

"Umm, sir. The employees from GH Development arrived here from Seoul. They are waiting for you in the meeting room."

"Oh, that's right! Please let them in."

"Hello, sir."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young greeted Gun-Ho respectfully by giving a bow to him.

"It has been a while."

Gun-Ho smiled broadly.

"What's in your briefcase. It's huge."

"I've brought all the reports and forms that require your signature, sir."

"Oh, Manager Kang. You didn't have to bring all those here. You could have reviewed and signed on them with your authority as a manager."

"I suppose we'd better have your signature on them, sir. I am sure that the accountant office prefers to have your signature on this paperwork."

"Well, since you are here, let's have lunch together after having a tour of the factory."

Gun-Ho picked up the interphone and asked for the general affairs manager.

"Can you show these two around the factory? Just a cursory tour should be good since it's almost lunchtime."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young followed the general affairs manager to the factory.

Hydraulic press machines were standing along with the wall and they were making loud noises.

"It's scary."

Ji-Young peeked inside the factory and hesitated to enter.

"Wow, it's amazing."

Manager Kang couldn't close his mouth while looking inside the factory. The general affairs manager laughed while looking at their reaction.

"I was told that President Gun-Ho Goo worked at a factory in Pyeongtaek City with a machine like these for a year or so in manufacturing some products."

"President Gun-Ho Goo is still young but he is an amazing person."

Manager Kang sincerely admired Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho took Manager Kang and Ji-Young to a sashimi restaurant that was located in the Asan Bay area close to Asan City.

"Oh, my goodness. I see the ocean."

Ji-Young seemed to be excited to see the ocean.

While they were having lunch, Manager Kang asked Gun-Ho and he looked worried.

"Umm, sir. Can I ask you something?"

"Of course. What is it?"

"Since you acquired that big factory, you will continuously stay here, right?"

"Well, I am not so sure about it. I will have to see how things go here first before I know it."

"What is your plan with GH Development in Seoul then? GH Development is a small company compared to Mulpasaneop. I am wondering if you intend to sell or close GH Development. If you do so, we will become unemployed. I have a hard time sleeping these days worrying about my job."

"Haha, you don't have to worry about it at all, Manager Kang. I will keep GH Development, of course. And I have a plan to grow it to a bigger company."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young felt a sense of relief as Gun-Ho made sure that they would be able to continue to work at GH Development. They then could enjoy the food.

After she is done eating, Ji-Young said she wanted to suggest something while wiping off her hands with a wet tissue.

"Can I suggest something, sir?"

"Sure. What is it?"

"Have you thought of CIP (Corporate Identity Program) before?"

"CIP?"

"It's a program to build a strong corporate identity that creates a public image of a company."

"Hmm."

"So, I was thinking that you might want to consider changing the name of Mulpasaneop."

"Change the name of Mulpasaneop? To what?"

"You can name it as GH Tech, for example, or GH Motors or something. The factory in China can be called GH China. That way, people can see some sort of unity in the names of the companies you are running, and it creates the corporate identity."

"Haha. That's what big companies do. I just have small companies. Moreover, Mulpasaneop has its customers and vendors that they have worked together for years under their current name. So, it won't be easy to change Mulpasaneop's name right away."

"I don't think Mulpasaneop is a good name, sir. Ordinary people like me wouldn't recognize what Mulpasaneop does by looking at its name, and the name reminds people of Mulpaseu*."

Manager Kang laughed when Ji-Young said Mulpasaneop sounded like Mulpaseu.

"Hmm. Actually, you are right on it. I have no idea what Mulpasaneop means, either."

"CIP is not just for big companies, sir. Since you are planning to continuously expand your business, you can integrate all of your companies under the name of GH. That way, you can earn your customers' trust. I read it somewhere about it."

"Hmm. I think you are good at not only accounting but also the design area, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong."

"Hahaha. I learned the design from a friend next door—the design company."

"How are they doing? That design company next to our GH Development office?"

"They are not doing well."

"Ms. Jeong, I heard what you said about CIP. I will seriously think about it."

One month later after Gun-Ho acquired Mulpasaneop, Gun-Ho changed its name.

"We will change our company's name from Mulpasaneop to GH Mobile."

Gun-Ho had a design company that made a new logo for the company and changed the company's official envelopes and notes, and so on accordingly.

He also changed the name of his factory in China to GH Parts Company.

Note*

Mulpaseu – a Korean liquid medicine for temporary relief of muscle pain

161 Business Expansion 2 – PART 2

"President Min-Hyeok Kim? It's me, Gun-Ho. How is the factory going?"

"I've paid all of the overdue wages and rents with 3 billion won that you had sent earlier for the factory operation cost. All of the machines in the factory are working fine except for two."

"Is the factory generating revenue?"

"Of course. Even though we haven't earned any new business, we are working with all of the customers that the company previously had worked with. We didn't lose any old customers."

"That's nice. It's really good to continue to work with existing customers."

"Well, they should prefer to work with us because we have the specific moulds customized for their products."

"Tell them that we apologize for our temporary suspension of the production for the past months. I believe they will understand our situation. Nothing much the factory could have done because its parent company was suffering from a financial crisis."

"Oh, I was going to ask you. Can you send Jong-Suk to us for three days?"

"Jong-Suk Park? He is very busy now in the production field. He still has a lot to learn."

"Well, I just need him for three days."

"Hmm. Okay. I will talk to the factory manager and will let you know."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho asked for the factory manager.

"How is Manager Jong-Suk Park doing in the field?"

"He certainly has a lot to learn in the production field; however, he is doing very well since he has extensive experience in the maintenance and repair in a factory."

"Please train him as much as you could. I'm counting on you."

"Don't worry about it."

"By the way, I will need to send Manager Jong-Suk Park to China for maybe about three days. Is it okay with you?"

"We need him here. We have a lot of maintenance work here."

"Let's send him just for three days. We have many other workers here too, compared to the factory in China."

"Okay then."

Gun-Ho asked for Jong-Suk.

"I was told that you wanted to talk to me, sir."

"Cut it out, man. Call me brother when we are alone."

"I was worried that maybe someone could hear us. Haha."

"How do you like the work here?"

"The factory manager is very strict, but he is extremely experienced in this field. There is a lot to learn from him."

"You need to go to China for three days."

"To Min-Hyeok bro?"

"Yes. He needs your help there. Go and help him."

"Haha. I haven't seen him for a while."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"The general affairs manager is not in his office right now. He went to the city hall."

"Then please ask the assistant general affairs manager to come to my office."

The assistant general affairs manager entered the president's office. He was wearing a suit with a tie neatly.

"Manager Jong-Suk Park here needs to go on a business trip to the factory in China. Please get him the Chinese visa and a flight ticket to China."

"Yes, sir."

The assistant general affairs manager gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho before leaving the office. He was about the same age as Gun-Ho and he was a good looking man.

"Bro, I feel sort of embarrassed whenever I see the assistant general affairs manager."

"Like what?"

"He is at the same age as you, right? And I am two years younger than him. But I am a manager and he is an assistant manager."

"You don't have to think that way."

"Moreover, he was born and raised here in Asan City, and he graduated from Dankook University in Cheonan City as an honor student."

"You have skills, Jong-Suk. You deserve the position you have now. Did you receive your salary this month?"

"Yes, I did. It's 4 million won. I could save some money now."

"That's good. All of the departments are currently full, but once the factory manager retires, I guess we will have many positions available in the production department. Let's see which position you want to take then."

"No, no. I am getting more than enough now."

Gun-Ho asked for the sales director—Director Kim.

"How is the new production development going for S Company that we met the other day?"

"The research center is working on it. They reviewed the product drawing that they sent to us and started making the moulds referring to the product drawing. We will need about two bags of the raw materials from Lymondell Dyeon though, so we could produce samples."

"Can we just call Lymondell Dyeon and ask them to mail the materials to us?"

"It won't work that way. It's not like they have the raw materials ready for us. They will need to make specific compounds for us. But the real problem is that they won't take an order from us."

"Let's go to Japan then. Let's go to Lymondell Dyeon's Japan office to see the president with me."

"People say that the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch doesn't like to meet with people from Korean companies. I once went to Japan to see him with the previous president of Mulpasaneop, but he refused to meet us at that time."

"Really?"

"Sir, I am sorry to ask you this, but are you really a friend of the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan office?"

"Yes, I am."

"I thought you were bluffing when we talked with the vice president of S Company last time, to get their business."

"Let's just go to Japan with me and see for yourself."

"Yes, sir."

"I will need to ask for another friend of mine to help me talk with the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch office since I don't speak English. This friend is fluent in English. He is an attorney of Kim&Jeong Law Office and he is

also a very good friend of Amiel."

"Kim&Jeong Law Office?"

Director Kim didn't seem to fully believe what Gun-Ho said. Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim while Director Kim was still at his office.

"Attorney Young-Jin Kim? Are you busy now?"

"Hey, President Goo. It has been a while. I heard you acquired a business in Asan City. Are you still there?"

"Hey, I need to go to Japan to see President Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon."

"Why do you need him?"

"It's about business. Can you tell him that I will visit him next week?"

"Sure. I will call him. Can I go with you? I want to play golf again at Yonehara Golf Club."

"Of course. Let's go together then."

"Oh, shoot. I can't go next week. I have a patent case I need to work on. When you get there, say hello to Amiel for me."

"Okay, I will do that."

After getting off the phone with Attorney Young-Jin Kim, Gun-Ho asked the sales director.

"Do you speak English? President Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon is American."

"I'm sorry, sir. I can't speak English."

"What about Japanese then? President Amiel has lived in Japan for a long time and he speaks Japanese."

"I don't speak Japanese either, sir."

"Same as me."

"I'm sorry, sir."

The sales director smiled while scratching his head in embarrassment.

"Umm, I know someone who can interpret for us though."

"Who is it?"

"A friend of mine has a nephew who is studying in Japan now. This nephew went to Japan when he was little, so he speaks Japanese very well. He used to interpret for us and our previous president—Se-Young Oh when we went to Japan."

Once the sales director left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho sat at his desk by himself. He moved to the sofa in the office and leaned back on the sofa, and then he closed his eyes. He thought about Mori Aikko. She had a gorgeous face.

"I want to see you, Mori Aikko. I will put your hair up. Me, Gun-Ho Goo will do it."

162 Business Expansion 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho asked for the auditor.

A company auditor executes an audit within the company and makes an independent report. However, in GH Mobile—formerly known as Mulpasaneop, the auditor was also doing the general director's work since the general director's position was currently vacant, in addition to his original work duty as an internal company auditor.

"I will be going on a business trip to Japan with the sales director next week."

"I was already told about the trip, sir. You are going to an American company's Japan branch office, called Lymondell Dyeon, right?"

"That's right."

"Have a safe trip, sir. There is really nothing I can help with for your trip since I don't have any knowledge of sales or technology. Haha."

"I asked you to come to my office because I want you to take care of the business and our employees during my absence. You will be in charge when I am not here."

"Don't worry about it, sir. Before you leave for the trip, why don't you have a meeting with our vendors?"

"With vendors?"

"The vendors are as important as our customers, sir. We need to have a good relationship with them in order to conduct our business smoothly."

"We have about 30 vendors, right?"

"Yes, we currently have 36 vendors to be exact. Let's invite 15 major vendors among them."

"Hmm."

"I believe it is important to effectively communicate with them. We convey clearly our request to them, and also we hear what they really need."

"I was actually thinking of having a meeting with our vendors as well."

"We still have an outstanding balance with the vendors, also with the service supplying agencies. If you remember the claimed amount of debt that was reported to the court, we owe some of those vendors more than 1 billion won."

"Hmm."

"I think we'd better have a meeting with them as soon as we can."

"Let's then have a meeting the day after tomorrow at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. Contact them to invite them to the meeting; we will explain how we acquired the company and how we have operated it so far with new policies, and also our company's current state after the court receivership."

"Okay, sir. I will prepare the necessary materials and documents."

The auditor was about to leave the office when he came back to ask something to Gun-Ho.

"Umm, sir. Why don't you change your car?"

"My car? What's wrong with my car?"

"You are the president of a big company. Once our sales revenue exceeds 100 billion won, you will become a public figure. You shouldn't take any risk to get injured or anything. I think it's better that you get a new car with a chauffeur."

"Are you saying I'd better sell my Land Rover?"

"No, I mean you keep your Land Rover as your car for personal use, but while you are working, you'd better use a company car with a chauffeur."

"I think that could be a waste of money."

"Our employees are highly motivated now. We are getting more and more product orders from our customers, and we started generating revenue since last

month. We don't make much profit just yet because of the payment we had to make to the court; however, we have enough revenue to cover an additional company car for you and wage for a chauffeur."

"Hmm. Okay. I will think about it."

The auditor seemed to have more to say.

"I have one more thing I'd like to talk to you about, sir."

"What is it?"

"This company is registered to the government with two directors and one internal auditor."

"That's right."

"I am the internal auditor, and you are one of the directors, and your father is the other director."

"That's correct."

"Among these three people, you—the president of this company and I—the internal auditor receive a salary. The other director is not working at this company, so he is an outside director.

"Okay, so?"

"Even though he is an outside director, he must be paid by our company since he is a member of our company's board of directors. He could get paid less than an employee who is actually working here, but he must be paid. Please determine the amount of his salary."

"How much should it be?"

"That's not what I can decide, sir. That decision is within your authority."

"I am currently paid 15 million won per month, and you get paid 8 million won on a monthly basis."

"That's correct."

"Then, what about us pay the outside director 10% of my salary?"

"That's too low. Some companies pay 30% or some pay 50%."

"Let's do 20% then. I will pay him 3 million won per month. My father is an old man and he doesn't spend much money at all in his daily life. He is different from the previous president of Mulpasnaeop—President Se-Young Oh who knew how to spend money."

"Okay, sir. I will inform the general affairs department to take care of the outside director's salary with the amount of 3 million won, and his Four Major Public Insurance."

Once the internal auditor left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho made a phone call to his father.

"Dad?"

"Gun-Ho? Do you need my certificate of a registered seal again, son?"

"No, dad. Dad, our company will pay you a salary."

"What salary?"

"You are registered as an outside director of our company so we will pay you a salary. You will receive 3 million won per month. Get some delicious food with the money with mom."

"I don't need money. You must need the money more than me, son. Keep that money and use it when necessary."

"I am paid a high salary already, dad. I know your bank account number with Shinhan Bank. I will send your salary to that account."

"I don't understand what you are talking about."

Gun-Ho's father didn't seem to be thrilled by receiving a salary, but he murmured instead by himself.

After getting off the phone with his father, Gun-Ho received a call from his

mother about 20 minutes later.

"Gun-Ho, did you tell your dad that you will send him 3 million won per month?"

"Yes, mom."

"Is that really okay with you?"

"Yes, mom. Dad is registered as the company's non-executive director so the company is paying him a salary."

"Really? That's great. I am getting acupuncture regularly these days; I guess I can use that money to pay for it. Can I split that money half-half with your dad?"

"Haha. Mom, talk with dad about it."

"Thank you, my son. You are the best son anyone ever has."

Gun-Ho's mom seemed to be excited about her additional income.

The factory manager, the chief of the research center, the sales director and other people at the executive level attended the meeting for vendors, in addition to Gun-Ho and the internal auditor. The meeting was held at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel.

The presidents of the vendor companies started appearing at the meeting. Gun-Ho and others from GH Mobile stood up and greeted them. Gun-Ho could see President Young-Sik Park from YS Tech among them. Before starting the meeting, Gun-Ho talked with President Young-Sik Park in private outside the meeting room.

"Sir. I'm sorry that I couldn't contact you earlier before the meeting."

"I actually heard that you acquired Mulpasaneop. I should have contacted you earlier, but I didn't want to bother you since you must have been very busy with the acquisition of a new company and all that. So, is the business stable now?"

"Yes, I believe it is doing okay now."

"I really look forward to working with you. My brother-in-law often talks about you."

"President Se-Young Oh?"

"Yes. He said that you are a very distinctive person."

"How is President Se-Young Oh doing these days?"

"He bought a small building and leased it out, so he could use the rent from the building for his living expenses. He is still living at his condo in Bangbae Town and he does mountain climbing a lot lately."

"I am so glad to hear that he is doing well."

"He actually looks great. He looks a lot better than he used to look when he worked as a president of Mulpasaneop."

"I see."

"And his son already got a job in a big company."

"That doesn't surprise me. He graduated from one of the top universities. With his high qualification, it must not be difficult to get a job in a big company in such a short period of time."

163 Business Expansion 3 – PART 2

When most of the vendor companies' presidents arrived at the meeting, President Young-Sik Park went back to his seat among them as the president of one of the GH Mobile's vendors.

All of 15 vendor companies' presidents attended the meeting that GH Mobile hosted.

Gun-Ho looked at every single face of theirs.

"All of them have a type of face that attracts money. They all have a company with about 50 employees and their sales revenue is in the range between 7 and 8 billion won."

Five years ago when he worked at a factory as a factory worker, Gun-Ho couldn't even get close to these people.

The meeting started with the internal auditor's report on the process from the acquisition of Mulpasaneop and the current state of GH Mobile after the company changed its name to GH Mobile. Gun-Ho then continued the meeting with his introduction speech.

"GH Mobile exists because of you all. GH Mobile has a new policy now. We pay the vendors in cash on time without delay. We expect you, in return, to provide us with quality products and services."

When Gun-Ho finished his short introduction speech, they all clapped.

Lunch was already prepared and served at the same place where the meeting was held. Steak and wine was the lunch menu. They were placed on each round table where the vendor companies' presidents sat at.

"Let's drink to the prosperity of GH Mobile."

"Drink to GH Mobile!"

"Drink to GH Mobile!"

Someone stood up and said,

"I am so happy to be here with you all, especially because it is not easy for us to get together like this. So I want to suggest you all something. Why don't we make this a regular meeting? Like GH club or something. What do you think?"

"I'm in! Let's elect a president of the club today too. I think President Young-Sik Park of YS Tech should take the position since his company supplies the largest amount of products to GH Mobile among us."

"I agree. Let's applaud President Young-Sik Park."

YS Tech's president—Young-Sik Park came forward and bowed.

"Thank you for your support, all. Let's make this club pleasant and productive. We can go playing golf together and also go on a trip abroad too sometimes."

"Sounds good! I like that."

"Can I come with you?"

When Gun-Ho tried to join them, they all laughed.

Jong-Suk Park headed to China.

When he arrived at the airport in Suzhou City, Min-Hyeok was already there waiting for him with his Audi.

"Hey, Jong-Suk!"

"Hey, Min-Hyeok bro!"

"It has been a long time. I think it has already been several years since I saw you last time."

"You seemed to gain some weight, bro."

"I think I am getting old; that's why. So, how do you like working at GH Mobile so far? Are you having fun there?"

"I've been so busy learning stuff. The work in the production department is sort

of new to me, even though I've worked at a factory setting for a long time. As you know, my specialty is on maintenance and repair."

"Yeah, I know."

"Do you have many machines at the factory here?"

"We have 10 injection molding machines. They are for rubbers though, not for plastics. We don't have extruder machines yet."

"Are they all hydraulic press machines?"

"Six of them are."

As soon as Jong-Suk arrived at the factory, he started working on the machines right away; he dismantled the machines first and repaired them.

As Jong-Suk dismantled and assembled machines, Chinese workers all came to the place where Jong-Suk was working, to watch him repair the machines.

"Korean people's skills are the best."

They shouted with conviction.

Jong-Suk repaired the machines at the factory one by one every day.

The machines that had been in a stopping position started working while making a loud noise, appreciating Jong-Suk's touch on them.

"Hey, Jong-Suk. Don't go back to Korea, but stay here with me. The machines seem to like you a lot."

"How much can you pay me?"

"Man, it's about you and me. We don't talk about money between us, right? Haha. By the way, where did you learn all those skills?"

"Do you have any idea how many years I've been doing this?"

"How many years?"

"I started working at a factory with machines right after I had completed my military service, so that makes me work in the field for 7 years so far."

"Hmm. It's a long time."

"How many workers are here?"

"We have 40 employees. I believe we will possibly have more in the near future. Since I got the stock option, I have been working my ass* off."

"What is a stock option?"

"Simply put, it's like a commission or incentive based on your work performance."

"Really? I hate anything complicated, and that stock option thing sounds very complicated. My dream is to become the factory manager at GH Mobile."

"Gun-Ho said, GH Mobile's current factory manager is about to retire because he is old."

"Yeah. He will probably retire by the end of this year."

"You will become their factory manager soon, right?"

"It's not a good idea to take the position so fast, and I'm too young to be a factory manager. GH Mobile has 250 employees. If I take that position at my age, they will all hate me and talk bad about me behind my back."

"But you have the skills to be the factory manager."

"It seems there are many skillful people there."

"Well, Gun-Ho told me that you are the most reliable and trustworthy person he could put in that position."

"By the way, Gun-Ho bro is really something."

"Yeah, I know."

"He is the most successful person in our hometown—Incheon City."

"Speaking of which, Gun-Ho once told me that he spent his adolescence there very lonely. He was depressed, and he didn't go to college like everyone else but through a bit different route. So, he said that he doesn't really have close friends there."

"I know Gun-Ho bro doesn't have many friends. I can tell because I am the only fishing buddy to him."

"Jong-Suk, let's do this."

"Do what?"

"I'm absolutely certain that Gun-Ho will be one of the richest men in Korea. His extreme smartness and brilliant judgment will make him become like one. Let's be his right-hand man and left-hand man."

"That makes us the major supporters of the GH Group founder, huh?"

"I suppose."

"By the way, bro. I brought 5,000 Yuan. I exchanged some of my Korean money at the airport. Let's have a drink somewhere really cool."

"I can use the company credit card to buy you a drink; it's within my authority as the president of the factory. You came all the way to China to help me. I should buy you a drink. You have been extremely helpful."

"Then, let's do this."

"What are you suggesting?"

"You buy a drink, and I treat us karaoke."

"Sounds great."

"Let's go somewhere where I can see many beautiful girls."

"Sure. You and me, we are still single, right?"

The two men headed downtown where they could find restaurants, bars, and karaoke or other entertainments while putting arms around each other's

shoulders.

164 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho arrived at Haneda Airport in Tokyo, Japan, accompanied by the sales director.

The interpreter whom the sales director asked for was waiting for Gun-Ho's party at the airport. He seemed to be in his late 20s and he was wearing thick glasses and shabby clothes, and his hair was disheveled.

"This is actually my nephew. He is an international student here in Japan. He is currently taking some time off from school and working part-time."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho extended his hand to the sales director's nephew for a handshake.

Gun-Ho now looked like the president of a company. Anyone who saw Gun-Ho these days would guess that he would be a rich businessman. He had a nice skin tone that had been well maintained by a skincare shop. He was always wearing expensive high-end clothes. There was no one who would ignore or disrespect him as he had been treated in the past when he was a factory worker.

The interpreter respectfully gave Gun-Ho a 90-degree bow.

When they were greeting each other, Gun-Ho heard a familiar voice.

"Ohisasi Burideseu! (Long time no see)"

Gun-Ho turned his head around and saw the chauffeur from Lymondell Dyeon.

"Oh, hi. How are you?"

Gun-Ho extended his hand to the chauffeur, and the chauffeur bowed to Gun-Ho very politely in a Japanese style.

Gun-Ho introduced the chauffeur to the sales director.

"Director Kim, this is the chauffeur sent by President Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon. He sent him and a car to pick us up."

"What? Lymondell Dyeon sent a car to the airport for us?"

The sales director was astonished because the last time when he had come to Japan with the previous president—Se-Young Oh of Mulpasaneop to meet the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch ("Dyeon Japan"), they simply ignored them. He couldn't believe that the same Dyeon Japan's president sent a car to Gun-Ho at the airport to pick him up.

"Let's go to Nihonbashi first."

Gun-Ho asked the chauffeur from Dyeon Japan to go to Nihonbashi before going to the hotel, where Amiel's office was located. Dyeon Japan's office was situated in Nihonbashi while its factory was in Yokohama.

When Gun-Ho entered Amiel's office, Amiel was looking at some kind of product drawing. Amiel, who was overweight, was wearing overall pants.

"Mr. Amiel!"

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo!"

Gun-Ho and Amiel greeted each other by hugging.

The sales director was looking at these two men in amazement.

Once Gun-Ho's party sat at a table, a Japanese lady secretary—who looked neat—brought tea to them.

"Let's have some tea. How have you been?"

"I have been doing good. Attorney Young-Jin Park said hello to you, Amiel."

"I wish he was here with you."

"Me too."

"So you are here to play golf, President Goo? Or you came here to go to that bar again in Shinjuku City?"

"No, Amiel. I am here for business."

"Business?"

"I acquired an auto parts manufacturing company recently."

"A factory?"

"Yeah. It's a plastic and rubber factory. The parts we manufacture are usually used for a chassis and engine."

"Really? Where is the factory located at?"

"It's in Asan City, Chungnam in Korea. We currently have 250 employees."

"250? It's a large company then. Is the company well established and old?"

"Yes, the company has been in the business for a long time. They were suffering from a financial crisis when I acquired it."

"Oh, I see. Running a factory shouldn't be an easy job. Well, you used to be a mechanic, right? I guess you should be fine then. You will succeed."

"Oh, this is the sales director of our company, and this is our interpreter. Since you, Amiel speak Japanese fluently, I came with the interpreter who can speak Japanese."

"I see."

Amiel offered his hand to Director Kim and the interpreter for a handshake.

After the handshake, Gun-Ho and Amiel drank their tea without saying a word for a moment.

Gun-Ho talked to the sales director while wiping the tea off his mouth with a napkin.

"Director Kim, please take out the product drawing that we received from S Company. The one with their new product—AM083."

The sales director took out the product drawing.

"This is a product drawing from one of the biggest companies in Korea—S Company—sent to us. They want us to make this product for them, and it requires raw materials made by Lymondell Dyeon."

"Hmm."

"Not just raw materials. We need you to mix some ingredients and make a customized compound for us. We have a specific color, durability, and hardness that we need."

"Hmm."

"It's a special urethane-related product that we need, so it has to be a Dyeon product. Can you make the compound for us here? I want to make a sample. We already have the necessary mould for it."

"Hmm. I think I remember this product drawing. A Korean company came and showed me this drawing before. I believe it was Egnopak."

"Oh, really?"

"There is a problem though."

"What is it?"

"In order to make this for you, we need to stop producing one of our products temporarily. As you know, President Goo, our factory in Yokohama is situated inside a city, so we can't increase the factory's capacity to produce more products. We can't expand the factory because it is located in a residential area."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho nodded his head. What Amiel said made sense to him.

"How is it going with your joint venture plan with Egnopak? If Egnopak will produce your products, maybe I can ask them to produce ours."

"It's not going anywhere. Egnopak demands too much, and that is stalling our joint venture plan."

"You can find another company then."

"You don't understand, President Goo. It's not that simple. We have certain requirements for selecting our co-venturer. We consider the potential co-venturer's amount of capital, sales networks, and so on. We even take into account the company's president's strong will to participate in the joint venture and aptitude for it as well. Egnopak satisfied all of our requirements, but its president is just too greedy."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho seemed to make up his mind and dragged his chair towards Amiel and said,

"What about me? I can participate in a joint venture."

"You? President Goo? Hahaha. It's not that simple."

"I have money too."

"It would take a substantial amount of money to start a joint venture with us. You will have to purchase extruder machines from the U.S. or Germany as well. You also need a large yard at your factory to allow a 40-foot container to rotate there."

"If I have to, I will make it happen."

"You recently purchased a company in Asan City; you must have exhausted your funds by doing so."

"I've made things happen, that many people said it would be impossible, in my life. Let's do it."

"I like the fact that you are highly driven."

At that moment, the interpreter excused himself to go to the bathroom, and the conversation between Gun-Ho and Amiel had to stop temporarily.

After quite a while, the interpreter came back to the office.

The sales director scolded his nephew—the interpreter—for causing an important business conversation stalled.

"Do you really have to go to the bathroom now that our president is having an important discussion with President Amiel?"

"I'm so sorry, but I had to go; believe me."

Gun-Ho smiled and defended the interpreter.

"He couldn't help it. We can't ask him to hold it in, Director Kim. Okay, let's continue."

"Yes, sir."

The interpreter placed his note and a pen in front of him to get ready for the interpretation.

Gun-Ho started talking.

"President Amiel, why don't you come and visit our company in Asan City?"

"Your factory in Asan City?"

"Yes. You have to see it yourself before you determine whether our company is qualified to be Dyeon's co-venturer or not, right?"

"Hmm."

The sales director added,

"I've once come here with the president of Mulpasaneop to meet with you, President Amiel."

"Mulpasaneop?"

"Yes, the company that President Gun-Ho Goo acquired is Mulpasaneop."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho gave a little push to Amiel again.

"Come visit us. You have to see it before you decide. I don't want you to feel pressured or anything; just come and visit me at my company. We can have another good time at the bar in Hannam Town and enjoy the melody of Gayageum once again."

165 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 1 – PART 2

"Gayageum? I love to hear that again. I truly enjoy Asian melody. Hahaha. Since you are here, President Goo, we should go listening to Shamisen."

"I actually want to see the dancing geisha."

"Oh, that geisha who looked like a fairy."

"I'll treat you guys this time since I'm here for business."

"Haha. Sounds good then."

Gun-Ho came back to the hotel to take a short rest before his evening schedule started. He would meet Amiel again in the evening at 7 pm. They would go to the bar that they went to the last time Gun-Ho visited Japan. The interpreter followed Gun-Ho to New Otani Hotel where Gun-Ho was staying.

Gun-Ho asked for the interpreter.

"How long have you been living in Japan?"

"I've been here for about 7 years."

"Are you a graduate student?"

"No, I am a college student."

"You have been here for 7 years, but you are still in college?"

"Yes. I often took the time off from college to work part-time."

"Hmm. I see."

Gun-Ho took out a white envelope from the pocket of his jacket and handed it to the interpreter.

"Have some food or drink with this and spend some time somewhere and meet me at 6:30 pm here. I will need your interpretation during dinner time."

"Thank you, sir."

The interpreter gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho sat at a café inside the hotel and had a cup of coffee, and he was thinking.

He was not sure if it was the right way to live a life to spend several years at another country to study like the interpreter, or to spend several years studying for the government job exam while living in a tiny OneRoom like himself or many other Korean young people.

When it was 6:30 pm, the chauffeur arrived at the hotel, who was sent by Amiel. The interpreter came to the hotel as well. Gun-Ho wore bright-colored shirts inside his jacket, that he purchased earlier at a store inside New Otani Hotel.

"Okay, let's go."

"Are we really going to a bar?"

"Yes. Since you have worked in a company for a long time, you must have been at a bar, right?"

"Actually, no. Not that kind of bar where girls accompany customers while drinking. I have heard that there are places like that."

The sales director looked at Gun-Ho's back as he walked behind Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho looked big like a giant that night. The sales director once thought that Gun-Ho—a young man—made money purely by luck by investing in real estate and acquired Mulpasaneop with the proceeds, and he was displeased with all that. However, that was not how Gun-Ho acquired the company. Moreover, he was 15 years older than Gun-Ho, and he grew up in a somewhat wealthy family where his father worked at an executive level in a big company. He didn't have to work when he was in high school so he could only focus on studying. He graduated from a decent college—Hanyang University in Seoul—and had worked at several different companies before he finally joined Mulpasaneop.

"I have a 40 pyung large condo in newly developed Asan City, and I am a director in a mid-size company. I was so proud of what I have achieved so far. However, President Goo made me realize what I have is not much. I've never been to a bar like that before. President Goo is just on another level. Moreover, he is very knowledgeable about the work as well. The previous Mulpasaneop President Se-Young Oh's son— Hak-Seon Oh—of course, cannot compete with President Goo."

Gun-Ho who was walking in front of the sales director turned around, and gestured to the sales director to come quickly; he was smiling at him. The sales director suddenly got shivers up his spine.

"President Goo seemed to be generous and tender; however, he could be very cold and brutal if necessary. Even if he is smiling now, we never know what he is hiding behind that smile. I have to be very careful."

The sales director pulled himself together and quickly walked towards Gun-Ho.

The bamboo trees at the bar's yard looked greener than the last time Gun-Ho had seen them.

Gun-Ho told the sales director that,

"Even in Japan, you can't just come to a bar like this because you want to. They accept our reservation because President Amiel made the reservation."

"Oh, I see."

The sales manager and the interpreter were looking around the bar in amazement.

Gun-Ho's party sat on the floor that was covered with tatami. The room door was open and a middle-aged lady entered the room; she was wearing kimono. She kneeled on the floor and bowed.

"President Goo, it has been a long time since the last time you visited us. I am the hostess of this bar— Segawa Joonkko."

"You are getting younger every day, Joonkko-san."

Amiel made a joke to her.

"President Amiel is good at making jokes in Japanese style. Hahaha."

The hostess laughed while covering her mouth with her hand. Gun-Ho thought that the way the lady laughed looked very Japanese, and that made him laugh.

"How have you been, Mama-san?"

"Your presence makes our bar shinier, President Goo. Your shirt inside your suit looks fabulous. Hahaha."

The lady laughed with her hand covering her mouth again.

Amiel told the lady.

"Since President Goo is here, please bring the best dishes you could prepare tonight."

"What about liquor? Would you like to have western liquor or Japanese sake?"

Gun-Ho responded for Amiel while taking off his jacket,

"Well, since we are in Japan, let's have Japanese sake."

"Yes, sir. I will prepare Kubota Manjyu (name of liquor)."

While she was saying it, she hastily stood up and took Gun-Ho's jacket and hung it on the wall.

The dishes started coming out.

Gun-Ho and Amiel were having a good time while drinking and talking and enjoying each other's company. The sales director couldn't even think of chipping in.

"Have some food. I guess you're too busy to even eat since you're interpreting for me. Haha. Director Kim, have some food."

"Yes, sir."

Amiel called for the hostess.

"Let us hear Shamisen now."

"Sure. I will be right back."

Three young women who were wearing Yukata entered the room and started playing Shamisen. Amiel seemed to be fully enjoying Shamisen with his eyes closed. He seemed to truly like Asian melody. When the ladies played three music with Shamisen, Mama-san came in the room again.

"Is there anything else you need, sir?"

"We do need one more thing."

"What is it?"

"We want to see Mori Aikko's dance."

"Hahaha. I knew you would say that."

Mama-san clapped and a young lady who was wearing colorful Kimono entered the room.

It was Mori Aikko who was the most famous dancing geisha in Gion (Kyoto's famous geisha district).

Mori Aikko kneeled on the floor and placed a hand fan that she carried with her, in front of her.

"I am Mori Aikko."

Mori Aikko placed her head on the floor deep enough that her nose almost touched the floor.

"Good to see you again, Mori Aikko!"

When Gun-Ho said her name, Mori Aikko lifted her head and looked at Gun-Ho. She then smiled at Gun-Ho; it seemed that she recognized him.

The sales director's and the interpreter's jaws dropped.

166 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 2 – PART 1

Geisha Mori Aikko started dancing along with the sad melody from Shamisen.

'Mori Aikko, I missed you so much. I am crazy about you.'

Gun-Ho picked up a glass of sake that was placed on the table in front of him and gulped it down.

The sales manager and the interpreter were lost for words; they couldn't take their eyes off Mori Aikko's dancing. The interpreter seemed to forget why he was there in the first place. Even though Amiel said something, he didn't interpret for Gun-Ho, but he was just watching Mori Aikko dancing with his mouth open.

Once the dance ended, Amiel clapped passionately.

"Oh, wonderful!"

Gun-Ho clapped along with Amiel. The sales manager and the interpreter seemed to forget to clap.

Gun-Ho could hear Mama-san's laughing.

"Hahaha. Goo-Sajjo-san, did you like Mori Aikko's dance?"

"Of course. I loved it. Mori Aikko, I will pour liquor in your glass to show my appreciation; please take it."

Mama-san answered on behalf of Mori Aikko.

"A dancing geisha is not supposed to take any client's offer of drink. Please understand and forgive us."

"Then why don't you pour the liquor in my glass instead?"

"Hahaha. Actually, she is not supposed to do that either; however, since You, Goo-Sajjo-san is our special guest, I will let her. Aikko, fill in President Goo's glass with liquor."

Mori Aikko approached the table where Gun-Ho was sitting at. She went down on her knees and picked up the bottle of liquor. Gun-Ho felt like he could hear Mori Aikko's breathing when she came close to him. He felt dizzy, and his hand that was holding his glass was shaking.

"Hahaha. Goo-Sajjo-san, you seemed to be drunk already."

Gun-Ho gulped down the liquor that Mori Aikko poured for him.

After drinking the liquor, Gun-Ho picked up a flower from a decoration piece placed on the table and handed it to Mori Aikko.

Mori Aikko hesitated to take it.

"You can take it."

As Mama-san allowed her to take the flower, Mori Aikko took it from Gun-Ho with two hands.

"Arigatto Gojaimasseu (Thank you in Japanese)."

After drinking another glass of liquor that he filled in by himself, Gun-Ho said firmly.

"Mori Aikko, I want to put your hair up."

The interpreter couldn't understand what Gun-Ho just said.

"Sir, what do you mean by putting her hair up? Are you saying to lift her head up?"

The sales director was also looking at Gun-Ho with a puzzled look on his face.

"You can just interpret it as you hear, literally. Tell her that I want to put her hair up."

The interpreter interpreted what Gun-Ho said without understanding what that

meant. Once the interpreter told Mori Aikko what Gun-Ho said in Japanese, Mama-san's face hardened. Mori Aikko was sitting on the floor with her face down, but she seemed to be surprised as well.

Mama-san soon pulled herself together and smiled. She was an experienced and skilled hostess after all.

"Hahaha, you often make me laugh with your joke, Goo-Sajjo-san."

"I was not joking. I really meant it."

"Are you serious?"

"Yes, I am."

"Mori Aikko, why don't you give us a moment?"

"Hai (Yes in Japanese)."

Mori Aikko left the room after giving a bow.

"There is a certain procedure in putting a geisha's hair up. Moreover, you are a foreigner, Goo-Sajjo-san. Mori Aikko is a maiko, (an apprentice geisha) and she is a dancing geisha; she is different from the usual geishas."

At that moment, the interpreter and the sales director seemed to understand what putting her hair up meant.

"I am dead serious, Mama-san."

"If you really meant it, why don't you talk with one of my friends—Ji-Yeon Choi? Since you and I have a language barrier to discuss deeper about it."

"Who is Ji-Yeon Choi?"

"She is a restaurant owner in Akasaka district in Tokyo. She is a friend of mine. Hahaha."

"Wasn't she a famous actress from Korea?"

"Do you know her, Mr. Interpreter?"

"I don't know her personally, but I used to work part-time at that restaurant, and I've heard that she was a very famous actress in Korea."

"Hmm."

The sales director seemed to know of her and said,

"Ji-Yeon Choi was a very famous actress in the old days. So, she is running a restaurant here, I see. You probably don't know of her, President Goo. You were very little when she was still active in the entertainment field."

"Hmm."

Amiel suddenly chipped in the conversation to complain.

"Don't you have fun without me by talking in Korean between you three."

Gun-Ho smiled and clinked his glass to Amiel's.

"Thank you, Mama-san. I will certainly talk to your restaurant owner friend. Let me fill your glass for you, Mama-san."

Mama-san took the glass of liquor and clinked it to Gun-Ho's glass.

"Hahaha. Goo-Sajjo-san, thank you for your understanding. You are broad-minded and manly."

It was the day Gun-Ho was scheduled to return to Korea. Gun-Ho instead decided to let the sales director go back to Korea first.

"Director Kim, why don't you return to Korea first? I will stay here for a few more days and talk Amiel into visiting our factory in Korea."

"Sir, even though Amiel let us take their raw materials, we are not capable of making the compound with those by ourselves."

"What if I can bring an engineer from Lymondell Dyeon headquarters in the U.S.?"

"That could be considered as revealing their technology to us. If so, they might ask us to pay them a royalty for using their technology. Amiel wouldn't ask you

for it because he is a friend of yours; however, Lymondell Dyeon headquarters could ask for it."

"Hmm. I see your point."

Gun-Ho thought of meeting with Amiel again in person, and then he decided not to.

He instead decided to make a phone call to Amiel because he didn't want to lower his bargaining position by looking desperate to Amiel.

"Amiel? How are you doing? Did you drink too much last night?"

"No, I didn't. I think you drank too much last night."

"Why don't you come to my factory in Asan city during the weekends? We can have a round of golf and listen to Gayageum together."

"Golf and Gayageum? Those two words make me feel so happy. I can't go there this weekend though because I will have a guest coming from headquarters this weekend, but maybe I can go next weekend."

Gun-Ho sent the interpreter home too. Gun-Ho's stay in Japan could become very uncomfortable without an interpreter since he could speak neither English nor Japanese. However, he didn't care because there was no important matter he had to take care of in Japan for that moment.

Gun-Ho was sitting at a café inside New Otani Hotel while looking into a blank space when the Korean restaurant in Akasaka crossed his mind.

"The owner's name was Ji-Yeon Choi."

Akasaka District where the restaurant was located was not far from the New Otani Hotel where Gun-Ho was staying. He could walk there from the hotel. He slowly walked towards the restaurant. The restaurant was a luxurious and sizable Korean restaurant with a neat interior.

It was after 1 pm when Gun-Ho arrived at the restaurant. There were not many customers inside the restaurant since it was slightly after lunchtime.

Gun-Ho asked one of the staff that he wanted to talk with the owner.

"She is not here right now."

"When is she coming back then?"

"She usually stops by the restaurant after 8 pm to check the sales."

"Can you leave a message to her for me then? Please tell her that a person from Seoul really needs to meet with her."

"Which name should I tell her?"

Gun-Ho gave his business card to the staff instead of telling his name.

Gun-Ho did some sightseeing to Roppongi Hills and Meiji Jingu until the evening that day before he went back to the restaurant in Akasaka. When Gun-Ho entered the restaurant, the same staff who he talked to earlier greeted him and told him that the owner was there.

The owner was talking with a female customer. She was wearing an expensive coat, and she was stylish; her outfit and appearance seemed to tell that she was once a famous actress.

167 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 2 – PART 2

"Excuse me, Ms. Are you Ji-Yeon Choi?"

"Yes, that's me. Are you the man who stopped by here earlier today?"

"Yes, I am."

"Please have a seat."

The owner showed Gun-Ho a seat.

"Thank you."

"Do you know well the bar hostess in Shinjuku City—Segawa Joonkko?"

"How did you know that?"

"I received a call from her. She asked me if President Goo of GH Mobile came by."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho felt uncomfortable to continue to talk further since there was another lady who was present at the same table. That lady was staring at Gun-Ho before she talked to him.

"Sir, do you maybe recognize me?"

Gun-Ho looked at the lady customer. She looked familiar.

"I believe I met you once somewhere... Oh, Hannam Town..."

"That's right. I'm Mi-Hyang Jang from the secret bar at Hannam Town. Ji-Yeon Choi here is my sister. I came to Japan for shopping and wanted to see my sister before I go back to Korea. Don't you think we look alike?"

"Since you say so, yes, you two do look alike, but you two have different last names: Choi and Jang... Are you related as cousins?"

The two ladies laughed.

"We are sisters. Our names—Mi-Hyang Jang and Ji-Yeon Choi—are our nicknames. We both used those names when we were actresses."

"Oh, I see."

"Oh, that's right. I remember you now. You came with Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town. I always remember the people who came with Chairman Lee to my bar because usually, they all are very important people."

"Oh, this Mister came to your bar as well? Wow. So you know Mi-Hyang Jang and Segawa Joonkko from Shinjuku."

"I went to those places for reasons. I don't usually go to places like that."

"Of course. Since you are a businessman, you went there for your business."

"That's right."

"By the way, how come did Segawa Joonkko call me? She is a snobbish lady. She doesn't care if you are not a billionaire or a powerful man like a government high-ranked official or someone like that."

Before Gun-Ho could answer to Ji-Yeon Choi, Mi-Hyang Jang stood up to leave.

"Sister, I'd better go now. I have someone waiting for me at the hotel. I will have to leave you two. Sir, when you come back to Korea, you should stop by my bar, okay?"

"I will. Thank you."

Gun-Ho stood up to see her leaving.

After Mi-Hyang Jang left the restaurant, the restaurant owner—Ji-Yeon Choi—took Gun-Ho to a room in the restaurant. The room was decorated with an embroidered folding screen in Korean style.

"It's cozy."

A staff brought apples on a plate.

"So what do you want to talk about with me?"

"I want to be the sponsor of Mori Aikko—the dancing geisha in Shinjuku.

Ji-Yeon Choi looked at Gun-Ho with an astonished look on her face.

After a moment, Ji-Yeon Choi pulled herself together and smiled.

"I actually haven't seen Mori Aikko in person. However, I've heard that the bar is getting more and more customers because of Mori Aikko."

Gun-Ho picked up a piece of apple from the plate.

"Do you know about the qualification required to be a sponsor of a geisha? I am not sure if you have watched the movie—Geisha—directed by Zhang Yimou. That movie talked about a geisha's sponsor as well. To be a sponsor of a geisha, you have to be extremely wealthy and also you have to be someone who the geisha falls in love with."

"Hmm."

"Your wealth shouldn't be temporary though. You will have to be financially responsible for the geisha for her entire life. Moreover, you need to be loved by the geisha. I've heard a story of a geisha falling in love with a western man sponsor; however, I've never heard of a Korean man who a geisha fell in love with."

"Hmm."

"Japanese people usually look down on Korean people; maybe that's why it is hard for a geisha—Japanese girl to fall in love with a Korean man. Since you hang out with Chairman Lee, I can tell that you are a very wealthy man. However, it is still extremely difficult to take a responsibility to take care of a geisha financially forever. I recommend you give it up."

"I know what I am signing up for."

"Can you purchase her a 20 pyung condo that is located in Tokyo?"

"If that's what she wants, yes, of course."

"Hmm. I guess you are serious about this. A condo in Chiyoda, Tokyo costs more than 50 million Korean Won per pyung. Also, the geisha must fall in love with you, and that's not something others can determine; it is up to the geisha."

"Hmm."

"If the geisha chooses you, can you take care of her and give her affection forever?"

"I am ready to risk my life for her."

"You are a wonderful man. I have a feeling that maybe Mori Aikko will choose you, sir."

"Thank you."

Ji-Yeon Choi made a call to Segawa Joonkko.

Ji-Yeon Choi started talking in her fluent Japanese language on the phone. Her voice was so clear and pleasant that Gun-Ho thought she sounded like a news anchor. Ji-Yeon Choi paused her phone conversation for a moment, and asked Gun-Ho,

"Which hotel are you staying, sir?"

"It's the New Otani Hotel."

Ji-Yeon Choi continued to talk on the phone for about three minutes more before she hung up.

"Tomorrow is Saturday. They will send Mori Aikko to the café at New Otani Hotel by noon tomorrow. However, whether Mori Aikko would actually show up or not is totally up to her."

"That's more than enough."

Ji-Yeon Choi smiled at Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, you are one of the best men."

Gun-Ho asked Ji-Yeon Choi whether she had his business card.

"Yes, one of my staff handed it to me earlier. What is your company—GH Mobile—is doing?"

"It's an auto parts manufacturing company. It's a small company with only 250 employees, just yet."

Ji-Yeon Choi laughed loudly.

"If a company with 250 employees is a small company, what would that make my restaurant with 12 workers then?"

Gun-Ho laughed along with her.

"President Goo, once you go back to Korea, please take care of my sister too."

"I believe she is doing very well. Her bar in Hannam Town is doing good."

"Well, she is still paying for her husband's debt."

"Oh, she is married. I thought she was single."

"Her husband is Seong-Hoon Shin. He was a famous actor."

Gun-Ho knew of Seong-Hoon Shin. He saw the actor in several historical tv dramas before.

"That Seong-Hoon Shin guy started a film company only to go broke. Then they divorced, and then they suffered because of his debt. The person who saved her from that situation was Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town. He gladly spent a significant amount of money for her, so she could open that bar in Hannam Town. The building owner is Chairman Lee. My sister is renting the building from him to run the bar."

"Oh, I see."

"Chairman Lee used to stop by my bar from time to time whenever he visited Japan, but I haven't seen him for a while now. Maybe he is getting old, and it is

hard for him to stop by here."

"Actually, I owe Chairman Lee a lot too. I didn't borrow any money from him, but he has been like a mentor to me. He often gives me great advice."

"I hope you are not offended by this, but when I saw you earlier, I saw the shadow of Chairman Lee. Moreover, I was so impressed when you said you were ready to risk your life to protect the geisha."

"Hmm."

"I've been in Tokyo running my business for over 20 years now. I've seen so many disgraceful Korean men. However, you—President Goo—you are a great man. I do envy the girl—Mori Aikko."

"Thank you for saying that, Ms. Ji-Yeon Choi."

168 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho was sitting at the café inside New Otani Hotel. He kept checking the hour by looking at his Omega watch. He felt like time goes very slowly today.

"It's already several minutes past noon. Why is she not here yet?"

Gun-Ho was waiting for Mori Aikko and she hadn't showed up yet.

"Maybe I am not an appropriate sponsor for her since I am a foreigner and I can't even properly communicate with her in any language. It was my fault insisting on being her sponsor just because I have money. She is the most famous geisha in Japan after all. I was being thoughtless."

Gun-Ho regretted to suggest Mori Aikko and Mama-san that he wanted to be Mori Aikko's sponsor.

Gun-Ho felt sorry to Mama-san Segawa Joonkko from the bar and the Korean restaurant owner—Ji-Yeon Choi from Akasaka who tried to help Gun-Ho to become Mori Aikko's sponsor.

"I acted just like a nouveau riche. I used to hate the nouveau riche from Gangnam when I was in Noryangjin studying for the government job exam while working as a factory worker."

Gun-Ho kept thinking that he shouldn't have asked to be Mori Aikko's sponsor in the first place. He felt like an idiot.

Gun-Ho looked around the café in the hotel.

He could see a few men in the café, who looked like businessmen wearing suits. He also saw a young lady who was wearing jeans with a blue silk blouse. She looked like a college student, and she entered the café.

"A college student who could afford to have a coffee in a café, located in this

expensive hotel... Her parents must be very wealthy."

That college student-looking young lady was looking around the café with her hair blowing. She seemed to be looking for someone.

"She is a very pretty student. She has a gorgeous face, maybe because she is from a wealthy Japanese family."

When that young lady saw Gun-Ho, she smiled and walked towards him.

"Koko ni suwatte mo īdesu ka? (Can I sit here)?"

Gun-Ho couldn't understand why this student was talking to him. He looked at her closely.

"Oh! Mori Aikko!"

Gun-Ho had only seen her in Kimono before. He had never expected to see her in jeans with her long hair down like that. He almost couldn't recognize her.

"Hai!"

Gun-Ho gestured for her to sit on a chair at the other side of the table by pointing the chair.

"Okuretesumimasen (I'm sorry that I'm late)."

Mori Aikko bowed to Gun-Ho politely before sitting on the chair. Mori Aikko smiled slightly at Gun-Ho.

"She is absolutely gorgeous and bottomlessly cute."

While appreciating Mori Aikko's youth and her beauty, Gun-Ho suddenly became self-conscious about his own appearance. He felt like he was fat and being out of shape. He looked down at his belly while holding a cup of coffee. His belly seemed to have bulged a bit.

"Oh my gosh, what am I doing here? She is only 20 years old and I am a 35 years old man!"

Gun-Ho felt sorry for Mori Aikko.

Gun-Ho started talking with Mori Aikko by writing. They both knew how to read and write Chinese characters. Gun-Ho studied in China and Mori Aikko was born and raised in Japan. Chinese characters became the medium for them to communicate with each other.

"Did you have lunch?"

"Imadani (Not yet), Madadesu (Not yet)."

This time, Mori Aikko wrote a Chinese character on a piece of blank paper. When Gun-Ho understood what she wrote, she became so excited and clapped silently. Whenever she laughed, Gun-Ho could see her snaggletooth that was commonly seen among Japanese women. Her snaggletooth was slightly covered by her lips, which only added to her charm. She was very cute with her snaggletooth.

Gun-Ho looked at Mori Aikko's neck, who was laughing. Her fair skin was dazzling.

Gun-Ho took her to a steak restaurant located inside the hotel and ordered steak and wine.

Mori Aikko was not good at cutting up the steak.

"I will cut them for you."

Gun-Ho cut her steak into small pieces so she could easily eat.

"Here we go."

Gun-Ho speared a piece of steak with a fork and handed it to Mori Aikko. She chewed the piece of steak that Gun-Ho cut for her. She looked extremely cute.

After lunch, they walked out of the hotel building and took a walk at Yoyogi Park.

"Mori Aikko, I will protect you and take care of you for the rest of my life."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho held Mori Aikko's hand; it took Gun-Ho a lot of courage to do so. Gun-Ho's hand was rough with calluses—caused by his previous and prolonged manual work in a factory. On the other hand, Mori Aikko's hand was very tender and silky.

The cherry blossoms were in full bloom in Yoyogi Park. Gun-Ho was walking while holding Mori Aikko's wrist when he thought that the flower would look good on her. Gun-Ho plucked a cherry blossom and put it in her hair.

"Hold on, Gū daitōryō-san (President Goo)."

Mori Aikko pulled out a small hand mirror from her purse and looking at herself in the mirror to see the flower on her hair.

"You don't have to check it. You look beautiful."

Mori Aikko smiled at what Gun-Ho said. Gun-Ho was not sure whether Mori Aikko understood his Korean or not. Mori Aikko was a bit different from other young people of her age. It seemed that she didn't have a chance to properly socialize and learn about society in general since she had stayed mostly in Gion and spent most of her time learning dancing there. She didn't go to school and that made her more pure and innocent. She seemed extremely pure to Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko sat by the pond in Yoyogi Park.

"Are you okay? Aren't your legs tired yet?"

Mori Aikko shook her head from side to side while laughing.

They started talking by writing again.

"Mori Aikko, I love you."

"I do like you as well, Gū daitōryō-san. I like the fact that you are a self-made successful man."

Gun-Ho put his arm around her shoulders.

"Can you write down the lyrics of the song you sang last time at the bar?"

Mori Aikko started writing the lyrics. Gun-Ho looked at Mori Aikko who was sitting by the pond while writing something on a paper. He thought that she looked more like a college freshman who was sitting on a college campus, rather than a geisha.

'Whew. She could be a college student at her age. Why did her destiny lead her to the life of a geisha and let her dance until late at night in a bar.'

Mori Aikko handed the piece of paper to Gun-Ho. It seemed that she was done writing the lyrics.

Gun-Ho read the lyrics. Gun-Ho could read Katakana and Hiragana in Japanese. He might not fully understand what it means but he could read."

"Can you sing it like the last time you sang?"

Mori Aikko stared at the pond for a moment, and she started singing softly. It was a sad melody just like her sad fate.

"Anata no unmei ni meikakuna owari wa arimasenga, anata no kaori o sōzō shite kudasai... (There is no definite end to your destiny, but conceive your scent...)."

Gun-Ho started singing along with Mori Aikko while looking at the lyrics that she wrote down for him. Before they realized, they were singing together. Mori Aikko quietly held Gun-Ho's arm.

"It's about to rain. Let's get out of here."

Mori Aikko nodded.

The couple walked out of Yoyogi Park and headed to Shibuya. They bought an umbrella on the way and kept walking towards Shibuya.

They felt a bit cold as it was raining. They held each other as they shared one umbrella. Gun-Ho thought he could hear Mori Aikko's heart beating.

"Are you feeling cold?"

"I'm fine."

"Do you want to go somewhere and get some warm food?"

"It's okay. Let's just walk to Koendori."

169 Mama-san Segawa Joonkko 3 – PART 2

There were tons of restaurants in Koendori; the area was popular among young people and the restaurants there was serving food that was tailored to young people's taste.

"Do you come here often?"

"No, only once."

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko entered a restaurant in Koendori.

"What do you want to eat?"

"Ochazuke."

Ochazuke is a Japanese dish with cooked rice and fish—it is served with hot green tea poured on top of them.

"Do you want to drink too? Since we are wet with the rain, maybe we want a glass of sake?"

"No, I prefer Bīru (beer). Hayashi Bīru please."

"Haha, really? Sure. I will have Bīru as well."

Gun-Ho looked around the restaurant. The restaurant was filled with young people. He could see lots of people at Mori Aikko's age—they were talking and laughing with their friends while enjoying the food.

'I'm sorry, Mori Aikko.'

It was getting warm inside the restaurant. Gun-Ho thought it was a good idea to order a beer.

Gun-Ho placed a piece of blank paper on the table and started communicating

with Mori Aikko by writing again. Gun-Ho started talking about his past life such as his time with military service and working at a factory in Hwaseong and Pocheon City.

"I used to be on the guard and I had to hold my rifle like this."

Gun-Ho described his life to her by writing. He even drew some pictures to help her understand his story. Mori Aikko was all her ears while resting chin in her hand.

"Oh, it's already 9 o'clock. Let's go home."

The rain was continuously pouring down.

Gun-Ho tried to grab a taxi but it wasn't easy at this hour in the rain. After spending some time trying it, he finally grabbed a taxi.

"Let's go to the New Otani Hotel, please."

"Geez, you are so wet with the rain."

The kind and old taxi driver turned on the heat for them.

The couple arrived at the hotel.

"Why don't we go to my room first to dry you up before you go home?"

Mori Aikko seemed to hesitate.

"Don't worry. I'm not going to bite you. Let's go."

Gun-Ho grabbed Mori Aikko's wrist and led her to his room. She followed him while staggering; she seemed to be a bit drunk.

Gun-Ho had her sit on a chair in his hotel room.

"You are feeling cold, right? I will get you some hot tea."

Gun-Ho quickly pushed the button of his electric kettle to start making boiling water.

Gun-Ho helped Mori Aikko sit straight before handing her a cup of hot tea.

Gun-Ho stared at Mori Aikko who was having the tea. Her silk blouse was wet with the rain and revealed her curvy body line. Her hair was wet and some of those hairs were stuck on her face. Gun-Ho swept those hairs up over the top of her head. He was standing so close to her that he could hear her breathing. He couldn't resist his urge anymore and abruptly hugged her tight.

"Mori Aikko, I love you. I will protect you as long as I could breathe."

Gun-Ho pressed his lips against Mori Aikko's red lips. She didn't resist but closed her eyes instead.

"I will protect you forever."

Mori Aikko was lying down on the bed; she seemed to be exhausted. Gun-Ho started undressing her slowly, one piece by another. Finally, they spent the night together.

Mori Aikko was actually a virgin.

Gun-Ho's bed in the New Otani Hotel room got stained in red.

It was about 3 or 4 am when Gun-Ho woke up and heard Mori Aikko weeping.

Gun-Ho brought a towel and wiped the tears off her face.

"Don't cry, you silly girl. I told you that I will protect you forever. Don't worry about anything."

Gun-Ho clasped her again and kissed her hotly and for a long time.

The next morning, Gun-Ho heard Mori Aikko taking a shower.

Gun-Ho was getting dressed with Yukata while listening to her taking a shower. He thought for a moment that he wanted to marry her and live with her for the rest of his life.

Mori Aikko came out of the shower while wiping her face with a towel. She was wearing a Yukata. She smiled brightly at Gun-Ho as if she had never cried in the

middle of the night earlier.

"You look prettier after the shower."

Gun-Ho said while smiling.

Gun-Ho took a shower as well. He felt refreshed once he washed.

Once he got out of the shower, he found his room cleaned up.

"Huh? How come the room is so clean?"

It seemed that Mori Aikko cleaned Gun-Ho's room while he was in the shower. The room was cleaned neatly and the bed was well arranged.

"You are like a Japanese woman from the Edo period."

Gun-Ho hugged her tightly.

Gun-Ho went down to the restaurant inside the hotel with Mori Aikko to have breakfast. The breakfast was served in a buffet style.

Gun-Ho was wearing a white shirt. He sat face-to-face with Mori Aikko at the restaurant table. Mori Aikko quickly stood up, then brought a juice and a napkin for him.

"Thank you."

As Gun-Ho smiled at Mori Aikko, she smiled back at him broadly.

Gun-Ho felt like he was a married man and was having breakfast with his wife.

"This is how I would feel like once I get married."

Gun-Ho was wondering if he could marry someone else while leaving this little and poor bird alone.

After having breakfast and a cup of coffee, Gun-Ho sent Mori Aikko off at the hotel lobby. Mori Aikko's hair was well arranged and she was already wearing light makeup. People at the lobby glanced at her while noticing her shiny beauty.

"I will let you know what we would do about your future through Mama-san Segawa Joonkko. This is my business card with my number on. Don't lose it. And give me your number here."

Mori Aikko wrote down her phone number and gave it to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho kissed on the paper where she wrote her number down. She laughed while covering her mouth.

"I will call you."

Gun-Ho waved his hand to her. Mori Aikko turned around before she entered the revolving door and waved back to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho stood there while waving at her until she disappeared.

Gun-Ho went back to his room and packed his stuff to get ready to leave. He then walked out of the hotel and headed to the airport, and while doing so, he made a phone call to the Korean restaurant owner—Ji-Yeon Choi in Akasaka.

"Hi, this is Gun-Ho Goo. I met Mori Aikko yesterday, and I put her hair up."

"Oh, really? Congratulations. You are very good, President Goo."

"I want you to discuss the sponsorship matter of Mori Aikko with Segawa Joonkko for me."

"People say in Korea that if you did a good job of making a good match for a couple, you would get a new suit from them."

"Haha. Of course. I won't forget how hard you tried to help me."

"Haha. I'm just kidding, President Goo. I do wish you prosperity with your business. If you get Mori Aikko a place to stay, I guess you will be able to see her more often. Remember, only a hero could have a beautiful woman. Congratulations, again. Hahaha."

On the plane back to Korea, Gun-Ho felt great. He felt like he could fly. Everything would be fine, he thought.

170 Company Restructuring 1 – PART 1

The internal auditor was giving a report to Gun-Ho on monthly profit and loss at Gun-Ho's office.

"The sales and the operating income have increased; however, because of our high-interest cost, we can't expect the ordinary income. The funds you put into this company when you acquired it, we used them to pay for the unpaid wages and some of the outstanding balance of credit purchase and accrued expenses payable that needed to be urgently paid."

"Hmm."

"However, we haven't been able to pay for the loans from financial institutions yet."

Gun-Ho hadn't paid off the loan from financial institutions when he acquired the company; otherwise, he would have spent additional tens of billions of won to pay for them. He actually could have paid off the loan with his cash—210 billion won in his stock account, but he didn't want to do it. He didn't want to touch the money that he made by selling his Kumho Chemical stock and he hadn't.

"I will protect my personal assets even though my business goes broke. Look at President Se-Young Oh. His personal assets became at risk when his business went broke."

"Can I see the current status of the loans for each financial institution?"

The internal auditor called for the accounting manager and asked her,

"Please bring the current status of the loans for each financial institution."

"Yes, sir."

The accounting manager came back to Gun-Ho's office. It didn't take her even 5

minutes.

The internal auditor said to Gun-Ho while sipping his green tea.

"Since we are paying the financial institutions on the loan interests on a regular basis, they don't pressure us to pay off the principal right away."

"Hmm."

"The problem is with the loan from non-bank financial institutions. President Se-Young Oh borrowed money from several non-bank financial institutions when he urgently needed money."

"Hmm."

"Among those non-bank financial institutions, we are paying high loan interest to Capital and Savings Bank. I feel like we are paying too much to them."

'Maybe I should pay off the loan from those non-bank financial institutions with my personal funds.'

Gun-Ho grinned then thought,

'Nah, I shouldn't.'

While Gun-Ho was thinking about the loans with high interests, the thing that President Se-Young Oh had said earlier crossed his mind. He said 'Son of a b*tch Korea Credit Guarantee Fund.'

"Oh, have you heard anything from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund?"

"We actually received a call from them the other day."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"What did they say?"

"They said they would need to get your signature to extend the loan period since the company president's personal joint surety is expiring."

"Hmm."

"I told them you are on a business trip to Japan right now and you would come back several days later."

Gun-Ho thought he would have to do something about this loan of 3 billion won. All these debts came with the company, including the previous president—Se-Young Oh's personal joint surety when Gun-Ho acquired the company. They were the company's debt and Gun-Ho would have to pay for them since he was the owner of the company now.

'I will never personally guarantee the loan for my business.'

Gun-Ho was firmly determined on this matter.

At that moment, the general affairs manager entered Gun-Ho's office with a report. When he felt the serious vibe in the room where Gun-Ho and the internal auditor were sitting in, he hesitated to stay, and then he eventually left the room quietly.

After finishing discussing financial matters with Gun-Ho, the internal auditor left Gun-Ho's office. Gun-Ho stared at the current status of the loans for each financial institution that the accounting manager brought to him earlier.

"There are a lot of financial institutions that President Se-Young Oh borrowed money from."

Gun-Ho pulled out an electronic calculator and started calculating the loans.

"With about 9 billion won, I can get rid of those dirty loans from non-bank financial institutions."

Gun-Ho had about 10 billion won in his bank account in Gangnam, Seoul. He made a call to the branch office of that bank.

"Oh, President Gun-Ho Goo? How have you been? I'm so glad that you called us."

The bank branch manager made a fuss about getting a call from Gun-Ho.

"Will you be available this afternoon?"

"Yes, I will be here. I wanted to meet you as well, sir."

Gun-Ho drove to Seoul. It had been a while.

"Seoul is still so busy and that gives me a headache. I guess I am better off staying in Asan City."

When Gun-Ho entered the bank, the branch manager was talking with a client. Gun-Ho sat on a chair and waited for a moment. After 15 minutes or so, the branch manager walked out of his office with the client. When he saw Gun-Ho waiting outside his office, he was surprised.

"President Goo, when did you arrive? Why didn't you enter my office then?"

The branch manager led Gun-Ho to his office while making a fuss.

"Sir, you have funds in our bank that are just sitting there. It's such a waste. We have a very good program that you might be interested in investing your funds in."

"I actually came here to borrow some money."

"Borrow money?"

The branch manager was pulling out a pamphlet of the program he was about to show Gun-Ho, and he looked at Gun-Ho over his glasses when he heard that Gun-Ho wanted to borrow money instead of using his money to invest somewhere.

Gun-Ho handed his GH Mobile business card to the branch manager, and said,

"Actually I acquired a factory not long ago. The company has some loans from non-bank financial institutions and I want to get rid of them. I hope you could help me with this."

"Did you bring the company's financial statements?"

Gun-Ho gave a document to the branch manager.

The branch manager took quite some time and looked through the document carefully, that Gun-Ho brought in. When he was done with reviewing the paper, he smacked his lips.

"This company borrowed money as much as it could. No one will lend any additional money to this company."

"I don't think I want to use my personal money to pay for the company's loan."

"Of course not, sir. You definitely should not."

The branch manager looked at the document again.

"It's not getting enough sales revenue. I think you need business restructuring."

"Exactly."

Gun-Ho leaned back in the chair and crossed his legs. The branch manager was in his early 50s and Gun-Ho was in his mid-30s. However, Gun-Ho was changing in his attitude since he possessed a lot of money. He now acted as a big player from Gangnam. No one could see any clue about his past life as a factory worker from his current appearance.

Gun-Ho said to the branch manager with his legs crossed; he made it like a joke though.

"If you can't help me with this, I will take out all of my funds from this bank."

The branch manager didn't show any reaction to Gun-Ho's saying, but he seemed to think about something with his head tilted to one side. He then said something to himself.

"There might be a way out of this..."

"Did you find a good way?"

"When did you get the appraisal on the factory land?"

"I acquired the company when it was under the court receivership, so I would say the appraisal was done last year because they had to report it to the court."

"The money was borrowed from the non-bank financial institutions about three to four years ago. I guess the previous president had a really hard time running the company at that time."

"Hmm."

"That means that he borrowed the money at that time with the old appraisal."

"Hmm."

"This is good. President Goo, when you go back to the company, please have the original appraisal ready. I will visit the factory next week."

"To Asan City?"

"Yes."

"Hmm."

"And don't ever say that you would pull out all your personal funds from our bank. That really freaks me out."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to the branch manager for a handshake and smiled.

171 Company Restructuring 1 – PART 2

Once he came back to Asan City, Gun-Ho called for the internal auditor.

"We will have a visitor next week from Seoul. He is a bank branch manager who I have been working with."

"Oh, really?"

"Please prepare the original appraisal of this factory and a copy of it."

"Yes, sir. We have an old appraisal as well, four years old. I will have that ready as well."

Gun-Ho nodded his head with a smile.

The auditor bowed to Gun-Ho before he left the office. Gun-Ho saw his smile then. The auditor had worked in a bank for a long time before he changed his career. It seemed that he already got an inkling of what Gun-Ho was trying to do with the bank branch manager who would visit the company next week.

"Ha, he caught it very quickly."

Gun-Ho grabbed an economic newspaper.

While Gun-Ho was reading a newspaper with a cup of coffee, he received a call from Japan. It was the Korean restaurant owner in Akasaka—Ji-Yeon Choi.

"President Goo, it's me, Ji-Yeon Choi from Akasaka."

"Oh, Ms. Ji-Yeon Choi. Did you have a chance to talk to Mama-san Segawa Joonkko?"

"Yes, I did."

"What did she say?"

"She said Mori Aikko found a good sponsor."

"There are a lot of respectful businessmen in Japan, right?"

"Right, but most of those Japanese businessmen who are coming to the bar are old. I guess Mori Aikko liked you because you are young, in your 30s."

"Really? Haha."

"Mama-san said that a nice condo in Shibuya came out on the market and she recommended it for you. It is a condo located in Daikanyama, Shibuya, Tokyo. It's close to a subway station too."

"How much is it?"

"Well..., I think Mama-san got greedy and she wants a 85 large condo. I told her to find one with 50 but she kept on insisting 85"

"Is it 25 pyung in Korea?"

"Yes, that's correct. They said, they have a grandmother in Sapporo City and they want to bring her here."

"Hmm."

"You have to let me know how you want to handle it."

"How much did you say it is?"

"The condos in Tokyo are expensive. They call a condo as a mansion, and it's about the same price of a condo in Gangnam, Seoul."

"Hmm."

"Well, you will have to see the condo for yourself first before you buy it. Why don't you come to Japan?"

"Okay. I will come to Japan soon."

After getting off the phone with the restaurant owner, Gun-Ho said to himself.

"Wow, putting her hair up will cost me a fortune. I guess I will have to spend about 1 billion won."

Gun-Ho was about to spend 1 billion won. However, Mori Aikko who was the most famous geisha in Japan would help him make tens of billions of won in the future. They both couldn't even imagine that kind of things would happen to them.

Min-Hyeok called Gun-Ho from China. He said he found a new customer.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Wow, you are good, Min-Hyeok. How did you get the customer?"

"It's all about network, I guess. One of my friends who was a senior to me when we were in college, took a position in a Chinese branch office. He is working for a big company."

"Oh, your friend from college?"

"Yes, from Myongji University. We had a different major but I met him in an activity club in college."

"I see. Did you also get a product drawing from him?"

"Yes, I did."

"Then make a mould for them first. Did they say they would pay for the mould?"

"Yeah, he said once we complete the mould, send the invoice to them."

"That's good. A big company is usually a gentleman. How much order would they place?"

"50 million won per month."

"Then, it would be 600 million won per year."

"I want to send the product drawing to GH Mobile though."

"Why here?"

"I don't think I can rely on the workers here. I don't want to make a defective product. So I want to ask the research center in GH Mobile to make the mould for us."

"Hmm."

"I'm sorry to ask you this, but can you make a call to the chief officer of the research center? And tell him to make a mould for GH Parts Company in China referring to the product drawing they would send, and also ask them to find out what kind of raw materials needed to be used for the product."

"Hmm, it's not difficult to ask him. I will make a phone call. You can talk to Jong-Suk for details though."

"How is Jong-Suk doing there?"

"He is building a firm presence in this factory. He is very social and he gets along with everyone here. Moreover, he is very good at what he does."

"Haha. I knew he would be fine there. When he first started working there, he complained a lot about his work there to me."

"Oh, he did? Like what?"

"He said people in the production department were ignoring him just because he joined the company because you let him in."

"Really? I didn't know about it. He didn't mention anything about it to me."

"So, I told him to stay there for just three months since there is no place he cannot be adapted to. You will see. He will be ruling the factory soon. He is social and royal. He will soon earn a lot of followers."

Gun-Ho felt proud of Jong-Suk like his real brother.

After getting off the phone with Min-Hyeok, Gun-Ho thought of Min-Hyeok.

"He went to a good college in Seoul, and that is helping the business. I made a

right decision to give him a stock option. That's why he is trying so hard to get more business for the company."

Gun-Ho didn't even graduate a low-ranked college in a province, but graduated a cyber college. And he couldn't find an office job with his college degree. Many companies didn't recognize the degree from a cyber college as a bachelor's degree. So, he had to work in a production field as a factory worker. However, Min-Hyeok Kim had a different path from Gun-Ho.

"Min-Hyeok was good when we were in high school. He was in a high rank in my class."

When they were in high school, Min-Hyeok did well. He wasn't in the highest rank like Won-Chul Jo who graduated from KAIST or Byung-Chul Hwang who went to one of the top universities, but Min-Hyeok was a smart kid with a good grade. He could have been admitted to a better university than Myongji University that he graduated from, if it was not for his father. When he was a senior in high school, his father had a car accident. His father was a bus driver then. Min-Hyeok at that time couldn't fully focus on studying for SAT because his family had a hard time then. So he applied for Myongji University to be safely admitted to.

After graduating college, Min-Hyeok tried to get a job in a big company for a while. When he couldn't find any office job in a big company, he took a position in a quality assurance at a factory located in a province. He then spent about a year there before he quit the job; he said he didn't have the right aptitude for the job. Once he quit his job in a quality assurance department, he started studying for the government job exam. He was getting old already by that time, and he continuously failed the exam multiple times, he then joined Gun-Ho's company.

172 Company Restructuring 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho could smell money very well; that was one of the strengths that Gun-Ho had. He also had good judgment, and he grabbed an opportunity without hesitation once he saw one.

People tend to look for someone to blame when things don't go well in their lives.

Gun-Ho wasn't an exception to it. He used to blame his parents when he was suffering from debt during his factory worker life. His parents couldn't provide an affluent childhood to him. Now he was enjoying massive success because luck was on his side.

Gun-Ho was a mediocre student in high school with a grade of a bit above average. Given the fact that his high school was not located in Seoul but in a province, no one could say that he was a good grade student.

The grade of a student tended to be proportional to their home environment. If Gun-Ho was raised in a wealthy family and went to school in Gangnam District-8 accordingly, he would have been admitted to a decent college in Seoul and would have gotten a nice office job in a big company or become a professional. However, Gun-Ho developed skills and learned important things in life through his harsh life as a factory worker; he just hadn't realized it yet. Gun-Ho was also not aware that he was a risk-taker and naturally knew which side he needed to bet on because he recognized the winning side by grasping the flow of money. He had a unique talent.

Gun-Ho received a call from the bank branch manager from Gangnam; he said that he would visit Gun-Ho's factory today. Gun-Ho called for the internal auditor.

"The bank branch manager is coming today at 2 pm from Gangnam."

"I will have the workers clean the factory and will also have those appraisals

ready for him."

"Since you used to work at a bank, you probably know what the branch manager is looking for. Why don't you stay with me and assist me in dealing with him? If we could move the loans from a non-bank financial institution to a bank, we can enjoy the ordinary income, right?"

"Of course, sir."

Gun-Ho called for the plant manager, chief officer of the research center, and the sales director.

"We will have a visitor soon today. Please make the factory clean and arrange the semi-manufactured products in an organized way."

"Yes, sir."

The managers and executives who were in their 50s or 60s responded to Gun-Ho's request altogether in one voice.

The bank branch manager arrived. He was accompanied by another bank staff who was handsome. They were driving a black vehicle.

"Welcome."

"Your factory is larger than I expected."

"Please come in."

Gun-Ho took the bank branch manager and his staff to the president's office. He then took out the original appraisal and handed it to the branch manager.

"The appraised value of the main factory at the time when they borrowed money from the non-bank financial institutions was 5 billion won. Our second factory where the research center is located was appraised for 4 billion won. The storage was 2.5 billion won and the company dormitory was 1.2 billion won. So, the total appraised value of the company at that time was 12.7 billion won. The loan from a bank is 3 billion won while the loan from 4 different non-bank financial institutions is 9 billion won. We are currently paying 60 million won per month for the loan interest only to those non-bank financial institutions."

"What is the current appraised value?"

"The main factory is 6.2 billion won and the second factory is 5 billion won. We haven't had the storage and the dormitory appraised."

The internal auditor entered Gun-Ho's office.

"This is our internal auditor."

"Huh?"

The internal auditor and the bank branch manager seemed to be surprised when they saw each other.

"Sir, you are working here?"

"Oh, so you are the bank branch manager from Gangnam."

Gun-Ho was surprised by their reactions as well.

"So, you two know each other?"

"When I was a manager at the bank, he was the branch manager. I didn't know he is working here."

"I worked as a court officer for a while and then decided to join this company to work for President Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, I see. It is indeed a small world."

"I hope you are making a favorable decision for us."

"Haha. Of course, sir, as long as all the requirements are met."

"Let's take a tour around the factory since you are here today. You can review the papers later."

"Shall we?"

Gun-Ho, the internal auditor, the bank branch manager and his staff headed to the factory. The factory was clean and neat. The factory workers' cleaning job in

the morning seemed to be paid off. The workers at the factory seemed to work harder than usual when they saw Gun-Ho and bank personnel came to the factory and looked around.

"Hi, I am the plant manager. Nice to meet you."

The bank branch manager asked a few questions to the plant manager.

"How many products do you manufacture every day?"

"Who are your customers?"

The customers of GH Mobile were mostly big companies. When the factory manager named three customers, the bank branch manager seemed to recognize that they were all big companies.

"Hmm, they are all A+ companies."

The bank branch manager could tell right away the credit ratings of each company by hearing the name of the companies, whether it had A+ or B-.

After having the tour, Gun-Ho and the others went back to the president's office.

The internal auditor said to the bank branch manager,

"The factory is working vigorously. If you could take the loan from non-bank financial institutions to the bank, I would really appreciate it. Think of the time we had worked together."

"Of course, sir. I know you and I do trust you, sir. Moreover, President Gun-Ho Goo is our VIP client at our branch. I will do it. However, the papers should indicate the right stuff since I have to make a report to my superiors as well."

"Is there something wrong with the papers?"

"No, I think it will all work out. If we take an appraisal of the storage and the dormitory, the value will go up by 20%, so it will work. However, I have one request."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease

click for visiting.

"What is it?"

Gun-Ho and the internal auditor were desperately waiting for the bank branch manager's response.

"Please make our bank your major bank."

"The branch in Gangnam?"

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho looked at the internal auditor's face.

"It doesn't matter, sir. We can have our major bank in Gangnam, and we can still use the same bank in Asan City for our daily transactions. However, we need to inform all of our vendors and customers about the change."

"Hmm."

The bank branch manager said while adjusting his glasses.

"Once you move all the loans with non-bank financial institutions to a bank, the loan interest you need to pay on a monthly basis will decrease by 20 million won. The company's public image will become better as well."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho thought of it for a moment, and then he said to the internal auditor.

"Let's take an appraisal for the storage and the dormitory. Also, please inform our vendors and customers with our new bank information."

"Yes, sir."

The bank branch manager also wanted to see the company's organizational chart.

The general affairs manager brought the chart to Gun-Ho's office.

"There are 12 departments and 1 research center, hmm... You are running a big

company at your young age, President Goo. I admire you."

"Oh, thank you."

"And I hope you know the value of your internal auditor here. I have worked with him before, and I know he is a decent person."

"I am aware of that. He has been helping me a lot in running the company."

The internal auditor blushed at Gun-Ho's compliment about him.

173 Company Restructuring 2 – PART 2

After the bank branch manager left, Gun-Ho was sitting in his office by himself.

He looked at his company's organizational chart that was placed on the table.

"Should I restructure the company?"

He thought for a second and then put the chart back to the table.

"Let's do it after Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon visits the company."

Gun-Ho then made a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Kim&Jeong.

"How are you doing these days? Are you still busy?"

"I'm doing well, and I am not that busy now."

"Amiel from Lymondell Dyeon told me that he would visit my factory soon, and I haven't heard from him yet."

"Really?"

"I told him to come and see my factory and have a round of golf together."

"Right. I heard that too. You also said we should go to that bar in Hannam Town and listen to that Gayageum again."

"Do you think he forgot about it?"

"I will call and ask him."

"Thank you. Please do so. I would do it myself if I could speak English."

Gun-Ho received a call that Amiel was arriving at Gimpo International Airport.

"It's good that he didn't come to Incheon International Airport."

Gun-Ho looked for an interpreter for the occasion since he didn't want to ask Attorney Young-Jin Kim every time he needed an interpreter. He called for the general affairs manager.

"Do you speak English?"

"No, sir, but Assistant Manager Park from the research center speaks English very well."

Gun-Ho called for Assistant Manager Park, and after a while, he knocked on Gun-Ho's office. He was about the same age as Gun-Ho, and he was slim and was wearing glasses.

"Do you speak English well?"

"Not fluently, but I can speak English at a conversational level."

"I was told that you majored in engineering so you work at the research center. Where did you learn English?"

"I served my military service in Korean Augmentation To the United States Army (KATUSA), and I also spent a year in the U.S. as an exchange student."

"Hmm. We are expecting to have a visitor today. He is an American and the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan office. Can you interpret for me?"

"Of course, sir."

Assistant Manager Park was flushed with nervousness. He seemed to think that this was his opportunity to get closer to the president of the company that he was working for. However, it also could go the other way if he screwed up. He felt anxious.

Gun-Ho drove himself heading to Gimpo International Airport, accompanied by Assistant Manager Park from the research center.

The two men didn't talk much on the way to the airport. Gun-Ho had nothing to ask him about, and Assistant Manager Park felt difficult to talk to the president.

He wanted to ask Gun-Ho how he could have possibly acquired this company at his young age, but he didn't dare ask Gun-Ho.

"The weather is really nice today."

"That's right, sir. According to the weather forecast, it will be sunny until this weekend."

They simply talked about the weather until they arrived at the airport.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

Amiel was walking out of the exit at the airport, and Gun-Ho could easily recognize him. The flight from Tokyo mostly had Asian passengers, especially Japanese, so the American man—Amiel—was standing out.

"Amiel!"

"Hey, President Goo."

Before he could talk further, Gun-Ho introduced the interpreter—Assistant Manager Park—to Amiel.

"This is Assistant Manager Park; he is working at my company. He is here to interpret for us."

"Really? How do you do?"

Amiel extended his hand to Assistant Manager Park for a handshake.

"This is the president of Lymondell Dyeon's Japan branch."

"Oh, really?"

"Since we have plenty of time, let's take a brief tour of our factory in Asan City first before we go to his hotel—Palace Hotel in Gangnam. Please interpret for me."

Assistant Manager said in English what Gun-Ho just said. He didn't seem to be doing a very good job in interpreting though. Amiel seemed to try hard to

understand what Assistant Manager Park said; maybe his pronunciation wasn't easy to understand to native English speakers. Attorney Young-Jin Kim was more natural and relaxed when he talked with Amiel in English. However, Gun-Ho was okay with it as long as he could communicate with Amiel.

Amiel looked around the factory in Asan City.

"Hmm."

Amiel nodded his head.

The chief officer of the research center came out and greeted Amiel. He had a Ph.D. from Germany, and he could speak English. However, it was about the same level as Assistant Manager Park. Gun-Ho thought he would have to hire three more people who could each speak English, Japanese, and Chinese.

When talking about work and technology, fluent English wasn't necessary because they mostly used technical terms and jargon. The chief officer of the research center and Amiel were communicating fine. When the chief officer was explaining things, Amiel kept nodding his head. When Amiel asked something, the chief officer quickly understood what Amiel wanted to know. Amiel closely looked at the products and sometimes took a picture with his smartphone.

"Good."

"Wonderful."

Amiel seemed to be satisfied mostly.

Gun-Ho drove to Seoul with Amiel and Assistant Manager Park in his car. He reserved the Palace Hotel for Amiel, which was located close to Gangnam Express Bus Terminal.

"Please tell Amiel to leave his luggage in his room and come down to the lobby. Attorney Young-Jin Kim will be here soon."

Assistant Manager Park interpreted for Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho was waiting for Amiel at the hotel lobby when Attorney Young-Jin Kim arrived.

"Gun-Ho Goo!"

"It has been a while. I heard you were so busy because of a patent infringement lawsuit."

"You must be very busy yourself in acquiring the company. I wanted to visit your factory, but I just couldn't make time for it."

"No problem. Take your time. Our company is always open to you."

Gun-Ho introduced Assistant Manager Park to Attorney Young-Jin Park.

"This is Young-Jin Park. He is an attorney at Kim&Jeong. He is a friend of mine."

Assistant Manager Park gave a deep bow to Attorney Kim.

"Who is this?"

Attorney Kim looked at Gun-Ho with a question mark on his face.

"Oh, he is our employee. He came here with me to interpret for me."

"Oh, I see."

Attorney Kim offered his hand to Assistant Manager Park for a handshake.

Amiel came down to the lobby. He dressed casually.

"Hey, Young-Jin Kim!"

"Amiel!"

They hugged each other with a smile.

Young-Jin Kim and Amiel spent some time catching up at the lobby, and Young-Jin told Gun-Ho in Korean from time to time what he just talked with Amiel.

Assistant Manager Park seemed to be lost in admiration of Attorney Kim's fluent English, and he was just staring at Attorney Kim. Attorney Kim looked like a native English speaker in Assistant Manager Park's eyes; his pronunciation and

gestures when he talked were so natural and so American. Assistant Manager Park shouldn't have said that he could speak English well.

Gun-Ho said to Assistant Manager Park,

"Since Attorney Kim is here, you don't have to interpret for me anymore. You did a good job today. You can take a bus to Asan City at the express bus station across the street."

"Yes, sir. I will get going then."

Assistant Manager Park gave a bow to Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho took out an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"I do appreciate your work today. Here, use that to pay for the express bus to Asan City and for your dinner today."

Assistant Manager Park took the envelope politely that Gun-Ho handed to him with his two hands.

174 Company Restructuring 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho, Amiel and Attorney Young-Jin Kim went to a Korean restaurant in Seocho Town for dinner. They ordered Bulgogi* hot pot.

"Amiel, what do you think of my company?"

"It was good. It was larger than I expected."

"Really? Thank you."

"How much did you say your annual sales revenue was?"

Attorney Young-Jin Kim was carefully listening to the conversation; he seemed to be curious about Gun-Ho's company's annual sales revenue.

"It was 70 billion won when I acquired that company, and it will soon be 80 billion won. My goal is to make it 100 billion won by next year."

"Wow! 100 billion won!?"

Attorney Young-Jin Kim was astonished while Amiel was just nodding his head.

"The land itself should be twice larger than Dyeon Japan's factory land in Yokohama."

"I'm actually thinking of moving the factory to somewhere else."

"Why?"

"I need to restructure the company, and also I have another reason."

"What are you up to?"

"I'm thinking of using that factory for a joint venture with Dyeon."

"What?"

Amiel and Attorney Young-Jin Kim looked at each other in surprise.

Gun-Ho pushed himself closer to the two men and said,

"What do you think, Amiel? We can start a joint venture in that factory that you visited today. I have enough workers; there are 250 of them. We can select several tens of workers from them to work for the joint venture."

"Hmm."

Amiel didn't give any response to it. He was just sitting there with his arms crossed.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

It was Attorney Young-Jin Kim who broke the silence.

"Hey, I think it is a good idea."

As Amiel unwrapped his arms, he said,

"There are a lot of things we need to get through before we can decide to do a joint venture. We need to analyze the potential co-venturer's financial status, technology, and skilled workers. We also take into consideration the president's personality and strong will to participate in the joint venture."

"Hmm."

"The headquarters from the U.S. has a list of requirements to evaluate the potential co-venturer, and you need to pass it."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim said while pouring a beer to Amiel's glass.

"We have you, Amiel. Can you do something about it?"

"Haha. No way. It's not just a checklist he needs to pass, but they will make an actual visit to his company."

"Hmm."

"The land that I saw today is big enough; however, the company's debt ratio should be low too."

"Hmm."

The three men ate the food without saying a word for a while.

"I will restructure the company as soon as possible and will lower the debt ratio."

"The credit rating is important too. They will issue the company's credit rating from the credit bureau."

"Hmm."

"Once your company passed all the requirements, you will need to send some skilled workers to the U.S. and get them trained before you receive the necessary equipment by ship."

"Do I have to purchase machines? Or can I lease them?"

"As long as you satisfy all the requirements, you can lease the machines."

"Hmm."

"The joint venture in Korea will have to consider the market overseas such as China and Southeast Asia. The headquarters in the U.S. will probably want that."

"Does the president have to speak English?"

"Haha, no, you don't have to. They want you to run the business well; they don't ask you to learn English. You can hire someone who speaks English."

Gun-Ho scheduled to go play golf the next day with Amiel and Attorney Young-Jin Kim in Yongin City. After dinner, he decided to stay in Seoul since he needed to come to the area again the next day for golf anyway. So, he went to his TowerPalace condo.

"It has been a while since I slept at this condo."

There were tons of mail piled up in the mailbox.

The large condo looked so quiet and lonely. Gun-Ho went into the master bedroom and lied down on his bed.

"I want to start a family. Should I ask Mori Aikko to come here and live with me?"

Gun-Ho grabbed a pillow and conceived it until he fell asleep.

The next day, the three men started an 18 hole round of golf in Asiana Country Club.

This time, Gun-Ho didn't make many mistakes. He wasn't a disturbance in playing golf for Amiel and Attorney Young-Jin Kim like the last time they played golf together. Attorney Young-Jin Kim made a joke.

"President Goo, did you play golf all day long in Asan City instead of working, huh?"

Amiel added with his eyes widened.

"Oh, President Goo, you improved a lot. I think you can go to Pebble Beach Golf Links in California now."

"Pebble Beach?"

"Yeah, they have the most beautiful golf course in the world. PGA Tour Champions play annual events there."

"Really?"

Once they walked out of the golf country club, they went to Miranda Hotel in Icheon City. They enjoyed the hot spring bath there.

"Wow, the water here is so nice."

"Hot spring is not just famous in Japan. We have a good one in Asan City where I stay right now, and the hot spring here in Icheon City is very popular as well."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim who was playing with water said,

"That's right. The Onyang hot spring in Asan City has been around for a long time and very famous. According to the historical record, Sejong, the Great King came to Onyang to wash his eyes with the hot spring in Onyang when he had eye trouble."

"Really?"

After taking the hot spring bath, they went to a steak restaurant inside the Miranda hotel. Their table was on the terrace that was connected to an outdoor water park. They enjoyed the steak with wine.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo! I will treat you guys here; instead, you pay for the Hannam bar. Let's go there tonight, Ms. Jang's bar."

"The bar in Hannam Town? I was going to go there with you guys anyway. Amiel wanted to listen to Gayageum again."

Gun-Ho made a call to the hostess—Mi-Hyang Jang.

"Oh, President Gun-Ho Goo, I thought you forgot about us."

"I will bring one American and one more Korean today."

"An American will join you? Sure. I will have a girl ready, who can speak English."

"We will be there at 8 pm. We want to listen to Gayageum as well."

"Of course, sir."

At 8 pm that night, Gun-Ho's party arrived at 'Pine'—the bar in Hannam Town.

The bouncers who were wearing black suits came out and led them inside the bar. They treated Gun-Ho as if he was the boss of a Mafia or something.

"Is Ms. Jang here?"

"Please come in. She is expecting you."

Ms. Mi-Hyang Jang greeted Gun-Ho's party; she was wearing a Korean traditional dress.

"Welcome, President Goo. It has been several years already since you visited us?"

"What are you talking about? I feel like I came here a few months ago."

"You often go to a bar in Japan. You should visit us more often here in Korea too."

"I went there only once."

"Well, I can't compete with Segawa Joonkko."

"I think you can beat her."

Ms. Jang said while she was taking Gun-Ho's jacket and hanging it on the wall.

"I heard something from Japan."

"Like what?"

"I heard that you put the most famous geisha's hair up."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim and Amiel looked puzzled.

"Haha. Stop your nonsense, and bring us food. We will have Ballantine's for liquor."

"Chairman Lee always visited us at least twice per week when he was young."

Note*

Bulgogi – Grilled beef which was marinated with all sorts of vegetables and soy sauce

175 Company Restructuring 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho showed a seat to Amiel with a floor cushion on the floor and an embroidered folding screen behind. A large floor table with all sorts of Korean food with Sinseollo* and liquor was brought in. There were so many Korean dishes on the table that the legs of the table looked a bit bent.

Gun-Ho's party was talking about their playing golf earlier that day when two girls in a Korean traditional dress came into the room with Gayageum. They gave a slight nod of greeting to Gun-Ho's party and started playing Gayageum.

Amiel closed his eyes to fully enjoy the music. When the girls finished playing, he clapped passionately.

"Excellent!"

Amiel asked them to play one more music.

"I like the vibration of Gayageum better than Japan's Shamisen. It gives deeper sound."

After they played three songs with Gayageum, another three young girls entered the room. They would serve Gun-Ho's party in enjoying their time there with food and liquor. One of the girls could speak English very well.

Amiel seemed to feel good. It was his happy and lucky day. He played golf, took a hot spring bath, and now he enjoyed Gayageum music; moreover, the pretty girls were sitting with him to serve him.

Amiel looked at Gun-Ho with a smile and said,

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"President Goo, to be honest with you, I was a bit surprised when I saw your

factory in Asan City."

"Why?"

"I thought you were just doing a rental property business, and I've never thought that you would run a big factory like that. Well, I know you used to work as a mechanic, but still... it surprised me."

"Thank you, Amiel."

"Do you really really want to do a joint venture with Dyeon?"

"Of course, I do."

The girls served meat and fish to Amiel after removing its bones and cut into pieces so he could easily eat them. They filled Amiel's glass with liquor as well.

"Thank you. It tastes good!"

Amiel said while having his fish dish,

"Once you are done with restructuring your company, make nice financial statements."

"Hmm. Okay, I will do that."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim added to help Gun-Ho.

"President Goo has another factory in China. He already established a sales network in the Chinese market."

"Hmm. That's nice. I will help you, President Goo. For now, finish restructuring your company and make a business plan for a joint venture. You will need to include anticipated sales revenue from overseas markets as well, such as China and Southeast Asia."

"Hmm."

"I will send you basic information about Dyeon once I go back to Japan. It will be useful to know things like types of raw materials, prices of supplies, compound costs and etc."

"Okay. Let's make it happen."

The three men clinked their glasses to each other's.

"Girls, please join us and drink!"

The girls joined the three men in clinking the glasses while laughing.

Gun-Ho came back to Asan City, and he was sitting at his office. He felt good since Amiel was positive about Gun-Ho's participating in the joint venture with his company. He was thinking,

"Let's not restructure the company forcefully, but let's do it smoothly and naturally. It shouldn't have to be a painful process."

Gun-Ho decided to move the factory somewhere else. He wanted to quietly look for a good factory that he would move to. He called for the internal auditor.

"I think we should move our factory."

"Our factory? To where?"

"Can you look for a good one on an auction website? Once you see any large factory that was selling for less than half price of its original price, then let me know."

"Yes, sir. What about the location?"

"Anywhere around Northside of Asan City should be good. If you could, I prefer a factory that is larger than 5,000 pyung."

"Yes, sir. Are we then selling the factory in Asan City?"

"No, we will keep the main factory. However, we will sell the second factory where the research center, the storage, and the dormitory is located."

"I agree with you on selling the storage building and dormitory in restructuring our company. However, if we sell the second factory, where do we conduct our research?"

"Do you think it's worth keeping our research center? Is it being productive?"

"Umm, yes, I think so."

"The research center hasn't produced anything for the past three years, not even one patent. It seems that we'd better buy a patent, rather than get a patent with our own technology. Moreover, the workers in the research centers are mostly old people. The chief officer has a Ph.D. from Germany, but he is already 60 years old."

"That... doesn't mean we need to let them all go..."

"I won't lay them off. I will send all of the 30 workers in research centers to other departments."

The internal auditor nodded his head.

"I think that is a good idea, sir. Once they are reallocated to other departments, some will continue to work there and some will quit the job voluntarily."

"Also we have so many old lady workers over 50 years old in the production department, who have a family."

"Once we move the factory, many of them will quit the job as well."

"That's right. Their homes are in Asan City. Those ladies won't be able to move with their jobs because of their family. So, we get rid of inefficient departments and keep good ones with the remaining workers."

"Haha. You are so good, President Goo. You mostly have the workers make their own decision whether to quit or keep the job with the changes in the company."

"The problem is with the management people."

"You are right. We have way too many people in management. So I was thinking of two options."

"What are they?"

"The previous president—Se-Young Oh—usually embraced his employees even though they made some mistakes and tolerated them. He didn't fire people because of their mistakes or faults."

"Hmm."

"So I looked through their employment files and found some people who forged their resume and other papers in getting a job in this company."

"Really?"

"Most of them are the previous president's relatives or someone who has a personal relationship with him, or their children. So, we can ask them to re-submit their papers when we move to a new factory and tell them that we need those for the record, papers like college diploma and identification card. If they can't provide those papers, then we can let them go."

"What's the second option?"

"This company had hired people based on an interview; it didn't conduct any written test. So, I would require all workers in the management to take a written test on something like computer skills or language."

"But they are already here and working for the company. We can't fire them just because they failed a written test."

"I know it would be difficult. However, their test results will be reflected in their performance evaluation. We can apply the test score in their next promotion or salary raise decision."

"Hmm. So some of them might feel embarrassed with their test results and decide to quit the job."

"That's right. We shouldn't keep the people who forged their papers, and those who would get really bad test result. It's better that we hire new people then keep them if necessary."

"Hmm."

"Once we move our factory, at least 50 out of 250 workers will leave the company. We can start fresh then."

The next day, Gun-Ho called for the internal auditor again.

"Spread the word that we will move our factory. So the workers wouldn't be shocked when they receive the official announcement. They will resist less that way."

"Yes, sir."

The internal auditor was thinking about Gun-Ho on the way out of his office.

"He is young, but he could be so brutal."

Note*

Sinseollo – It is also called the royal hot pot. All sorts of vegetables and meat in a rich broth.

176 Company Restructuring 4 – PART 1

The internal auditor placed the storage building and the dormitory on the market for sale. The products piled up in the storage building were mostly returned products. Gun-Ho threw them all out without a second thought.

The internal auditor came to Gun-Ho's office and gave a report to him on a new location of their factory.

"A 5,000 pyung large factory came out on the market; it is located in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City. It was at first priced for 7 billion won, and after failing two attempts of sale at the auction, the price dropped to 3.4 billion won. Since the economy is currently not doing well, there are not many bidders at the auction. I looked into the current status of that factory; the building is a bit old but it has high electric power capacity."

"Okay. Let's buy the factory at the auction then."

"What about the funds to buy it with?"

"Sell the storage and the dormitory as soon as you can, so we can use the proceeds to buy the new factory. If we can't sell them in a short period of time, we will think of something else, then to find the funds to buy that factory with."

"Understood, sir."

Fortunately, the dormitory was quickly sold.

The workers from the management and the production department, who were living in the dormitory had to vacate their rooms; however, they received extra pay added to their salary as compensation.

"Find a place to stay on your own. You can rent a OneRoom nearby the company or move in with a relative or anything that works for you."

Some workers rented a OneRoom with the extra payment they received from the company and some moved into a OneRoomTel by adding their personal funds for the rent. However, there was no worker who would quit the job because of it.

The storage building was sold as well. The offer price was less than its appraised value, but Gun-Ho decided to sell it when there was a buyer who wanted the storage. The storage was sold for 2.4 billion won, and the dormitory was sold for 1.1 billion won. Gun-Ho bought the 5,000 pyung large factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City at the auction with the sales proceeds of these two buildings, which was 3.5 billion won in total.

The internal auditor entered Gun-Ho's office and asked,

"Shall we make a plan to move the factory?"

"No, we will build a new factory there before our moving; that factory building is over 20 years old and we will need a new building. It won't take much time."

"Are we building a new factory? But we don't have money to do it. We spent all of the proceeds we made by selling the storage and the dormitory in buying that factory."

"We can borrow money."

"Borrow money? From whom? We have more than enough debt, sir. No bank will lend us money."

"I will lend the money."

"Huh? You are lending the money to the company?"

"I will lend the amount of 2 billion won. However, once the main factory and the second factory where the research facility is located are sold, the company will have to pay me back."

The internal auditor looked at Gun-Ho with his mouth open.

'How much money does President Gun-Ho Goo have? 2 billion is a substantial amount of money, but he is talking like it was just pocket money.'

In the internal auditor's eyes, Gun-Ho looked like a mysterious man.

A few days later, Gun-Ho called for the internal auditor again to his office

"How much do you think it would cost to construct a new factory in the new location in Jiksan Town, Cheonan, which we purchased at the auction?"

"That factory is still usable. It would be a shame if we just demolish that factory building."

"Let's just make a plan to build a new factory and see what happens."

"The new factory would be nice but it will cost a lot. I was told that it would cost about 2 million won per pyung to build a decent factory."

"The land is 5,000 pyung large. Say, the new factory's ground floor area is 1,000 pyung large and we make it a two-story building, then the gross floor area will be 2,000 pyung. So if the construction cost per pyung is 2 million won, then we will need 4 billion won to build the two-story factory."

"That's right. It's too expensive. A big company might handle the cost, but we can't."

"Hmm."

"2,000 pyung factory is too expensive for us, sir. Why don't we make a one-story building? We can build another small building later for an office or a research center. We can also buy a shipping container building for an office later."

Gun-Ho was lost in thought for a moment, without responding to the internal auditor's suggestion.

"Umm, sir..."

"Yes?"

"To be honest with you..., building a factory is not my area of expertise. My area of expertise is a bank or money related matter. I think we need someone who knows about the construction of a factory."

"Hmm."

"I think it's time to hire a general director. The position has been vacant for too long."

"Hmm."

"I once worked on a case as a court officer for a construction company before. That company was eventually sold off in pieces, but I remember that the general director of that company was very good at what he was doing."

"He must be working in another company by now, right?"

"I am still in contact with him and he sometimes sent me a text message. I don't think he found a new job yet. He graduated from a good college, but since he is a bit old now, he seems to be having a hard time finding a new job."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho was thinking with his arms closed, and asked the internal auditor,

"How old is he?"

"He is in his mid-50s. He is very competent and talented in his field."

"Hmm."

"He actually graduated from Seoul National University majoring in architecture, and he had worked in a big company. He usually worked at a construction field overseas for that company for a long time before he was laid off when the company was acquired by another company. He subsequently encountered a natural turf battle in the newly combined company and couldn't survive. He also didn't play the power game right either. So he moved to a small company with a position at an executive level."

"It was that small company that started the court receivership because they were inundated with debt."

"That's right. The company started building a large commercial building and borrowed way too much funds from banks in the process, which they later

couldn't handle when they couldn't sell enough units. So the company went broke. One little misstep could result in a quick collapse of a construction company."

"He studied architecture and had worked in the construction field, but that is not really management work experience, right? Do you think he can handle the work of a general director? They are different fields."

"He worked as a general director in that small construction company. Because the company was so small, he practically took care of almost everything in general."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Hmm... Okay, I'd like to meet with him."

"Yes, sir."

"And also, I will add an additional 2 billion won to the company account for a new construction project of the factory in Jiksan Town."

"Huh? Another 2 billion won? Then, 4 billion won in total?"

The internal auditor was astonished by Gun-Ho's wealth.

177 Company Restructuring 4 – PART 2

The internal auditor asked the sales director to have a tea together after lunch. The sales director seemed to have a lot of questions he wanted to ask the internal auditor.

"I heard our company purchased a factory in Jiksan Town. It must be a really large factory; I heard it is 5,000 pyung large. Are we moving to the new location?"

"I am not so sure, but I think that's the president's plan."

"What about the factory here then?"

"I guess we will have to sell it."

"We will sell the second factory where the research facility is located as well?"

"That factory is on the market for sale already."

"So the new factory in Jiksan Town has a research center inside the factory building?"

"No, there is no research center there."

"Then what are we going to do with the research center?"

"Do you think we absolutely need a research center?"

"Of course. Our company is a manufacturing company. We need a research center to enhance our products and analyze the specific requirements of our customers."

"There are 30 workers working at the research center right now. Do you have any record to show that the research center has done something so beneficial to the company so we need to keep it?"

"Well... not really..."

"The research center workers are too old. You are also aware of the fact that they haven't really done anything for the past three years and they have been paid for nothing."

"But you have to consider the company's image. Having a research center and no research center makes a big difference when we represent our company to a potential customer."

"The company is currently spending several hundreds of millions of won to pay those 30 workers every month."

"That's a lot of money."

"The president will make a final decision on whether to keep the research center or not, but I have nothing to justify keeping the research center."

"Do you think the president is leaning towards getting rid of the research center?"

The internal auditor gave a big nod in responding to the sales director's question.

"It is very possible. If you were the president, wouldn't you make the same decision?"

"Hmm."

The sales director ran to the research center as soon as he parted from the internal auditor.

The chief officer of the research center was taking a nap after his lunch.

"Bro."

"Oh, hey."

"You can't just take a nap here right now. Haven't you heard about moving to the factory? If they do, we are not sure whether this research center would move along with them or not."

"Why? Did you hear something?"

"They are talking about the research center's performance. They say the center hasn't really done anything recently. Also, there is no research center building in the new location."

"Hmmm."

"And the monthly salary for the 30 workers in the research center currently cost the company several hundreds of millions of won."

"Hmm."

"They talk about what to do with the research center and you are taking a nap here. What are you going to do?"

"I guess I have worked in the field long enough so I can maybe retire soon. However, I am worried about other workers."

"You should have worked harder and produced some new products or ideas and get them patented or something. You have been focusing too much on the position title like a senior researcher or managing researcher or whatever. That's all useless things."

"I don't know what to say."

Once the sales director started talking about the factory's moving, everyone in the company became aware of the news by two days later. They heard about the possibility of getting rid of the research center as well. The workers in the research center started worrying about their job.

Gun-Ho didn't pay attention to the things the workers talked about in the factory, and he flew to Japan. He wanted to meet with the Korean restaurant owner in Akasaka—Ji-Yeon Choi.

Ji-Yeon Choi greeted Gun-Ho with a big smile.

"You look good, President Goo."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease

click for visiting.

"Thank you."

"I guess Mori Aikko is giving you good energy."

"You think so? Haha."

"Let's go to Daikanyama in Shibuya. Mama-san Segawa Joonkko will be there to meet with us."

"I haven't brought any down payment and I also have to consider the foreign exchange law. It's not like I'm investing in business here or anything like that."

"Hahaha. Don't worry about it. I have an idea."

"What do you suggest?"

"I have some money that I have saved up in my whole life. It's around 100 Yen (about 1 billion won). It's about the price of a condo in Daikanyama."

"Are you saying you can lend me the money?"

"Hahaha. I don't even lend my money to my family."

"Then, what are you saying?"

"I want to spend the rest of my life in Korea after I retire. As I am aging, I miss my country a lot."

"Hmm."

"So, we can do this. I buy a condo with my money for Mori Aikko, and you, President Goo transfer the corresponding money to my bank account in Korea in Korean Won, not in Japanese Yen."

"Hmm, I see what you mean."

"You will have to pay me the currency exchange fee though."

"Haha, sure, I will pay you."

"Since the amount of money to exchange is substantial, the fee must be a lot."

"Haha. Don't worry about it."

Gun-Ho went to Daikanyama, Shibuya with the restaurant owner—Ji-Yeon Choi to see a condo for Mori Aikko. The condo complex that Mama-san picked was smaller than the ones in Korea but larger than a townhouse complex in Korea. It was a newly constructed condo; it was clean and luxurious. The surrounding area was cozy like many Japanese towns were.

"I like it. The area seems to be clean and safe too."

"Mama-san Segawa Joonkko picked the condo. She has really good eyes."

Gun-Ho entered the condo. It was large and clean. A lot of natural light coming through the window and it made the condo look bright. It had a nice view from the living room as well. It was a vacant space without furniture, and maybe that made the condo look even larger.

"Oh, it is too big for one person living."

Ji-Yeon Choi seemed to be impressed.

"Oh, did Mori Aikko already see the condo?"

"Not just once, but she already came here twice to see the condo. I heard she was so happy that she jumped around in excitement."

"Really?"

"Think about it. It is really hard to buy an expensive condo like this one even for a geisha who is so popular and even assuming she would save up all of her earnings in her entire life. It's like a condo in Gangnam. Most people in Korea can't buy a condo there even though they work so hard."

Ji-Yeon Choi's phone started ringing.

"It's Mama-san. She is coming up with a real estate agency staff."

"Umm, I didn't bring my down payment."

"You have it here."

Ji-Yeon Choi was waving her high-end designer handbag that was worth 10 million won.

The agency staff and Mama-san entered the condo.

Gun-Ho almost said Mama-san to call Sagawa Joonkko, then he stopped—because it was really not appropriate to call her Mama-san outside the bar.

"It has been a long time."

"Good to see you."

Mama-san extended her hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"We will make a sales contract with Mori Aikko's name today. I have a power of attorney ready for the transaction with her photo ID."

Mama-san waved the power of attorney.

The real estate agency staff seemed to be impressed by the beauty of Ji-Yeon Choi and Mama-san, and he said,

"I think I am with the most beautiful two clients here today. The gentleman here seemed to be a very important person as well."

Gun-Ho looked at Mama-san and Ji-Yeon Choi.

They both were wearing an expensive coat and carrying a fancy designer handbag. They both looked gorgeous and looked like noblewomen.

"You are right. They are so beautiful."

"Stop it, President Goo."

The two women laughed while covering their mouths.

They all headed to the real estate sales office and made a contract there.

The condo was purchased under Mori Aikko's name, and Gun-Ho paid for it

with the money that Ji-Yeon Choi lent to him; Gun-Ho wrote a promissory note to her in return.

Mama-san said while holding the sales contract in her arms,

"I guess Mori Aikko is so lucky. She now owns a condo that not many people would have in their lives. She will now be able to focus on her artistic life and polish her talent in art because of his sponsor."

Gun-Ho and Ji-Yeon Choi were sending Mama-san off outside the real estate sales office.

Mama-san's black Toyota was waiting for her outside. After she got in the car, she opened the window to say something to Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, you came here all the way from Korea. Why don't you meet Mori Aikko before leaving for Korea? She will get off at 9 pm today, and I will send her to the New Otani Hotel lobby by 10 pm."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho gave a bow to Mama-san who was sitting in his car.

178 Company Restructuring 5 – PART 1

Gun-Ho met Mori Aikko at the New Otani Hotel.

"Aikko."

"Daitōryō-san (President)."

Mori Aikko was wearing jeans again. It seemed that she came to the hotel straight from the bar; her face was still covered with a thick layer of makeup. She looked tired. Gun-Ho could smell her sweat. He liked the smell of her sweat; it was sweet and ironically fresh.

"You must be very tired."

"I'm fine."

Mori Aikko smiled while flipping her hair.

"Did you have dinner already?"

"Yes, I ate it in Shinjuku."

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko sat at a bar inside the hotel and Gun-Ho was having a beer. Mori Aikko kept yawning; she must be very tired.

Gun-Ho took her to his hotel room and said,

"You seemed exhausted. Why don't you sleep here tonight?"

Mori Aikko smiled slightly and shook her head from side to side. The way she was sitting on a chair looked so adorable and lovely that Gun-Ho abruptly hugged her tight.

"You are tired. Stay here tonight."

As he tried to convince her to stay with him that night, Gun-Ho pressed his lips against Mori Aikko's. Gun-Ho could hear her soft breathing.

"I missed you."

Mori Aikko closed her eyes and she was ready to give Gun-Ho whatever he wanted to her.

"I made a sales contract today for your condo."

"I heard it from Mama-san. I will never forget what you did for me."

"I will protect you forever."

"Thank you."

Mori Aikko stretched and wrapped her arms around Gun-Ho's neck.

They had their second night.

As soon as Gun-Ho came back to his office in Asan City, he sent 100 million won to the Korean restaurant owner—Ji-Yeon Choi's bank account. It was the down payment for Mori Aikko's condo in Shibuya, Japan.

"I sent you the down payment to your account."

"Did you already?"

"As to the currency exchange fee, I will give to you when the transaction is complete."

"Haha. Sounds good. I will give your promissory note back to you the next time you come to Japan."

"Thank you."

After the trip to Japan, Gun-Ho felt exhausted. He was dozing off by himself in his office when someone knocked on the door.

"Please come in."

The internal auditor entered the office.

"The person I talked to you about the other day for the general director position, he is here. Would you like to see him?"

"Okay, please let him in."

The internal auditor left the office for a moment and came back with a man who looked like he was in his 50s.

"I'm Hyeong-Sik Yoon. A pleasure to meet you, sir."

"Please have a seat. I've heard a lot about you from the internal auditor."

The internal auditor placed some papers on the table.

"I asked him to bring his resume."

"Oh, you did?"

Gun-Ho looked through his resume. It was long and fancy. He had extensive work experience in the construction field abroad. The work experience that caught Gun-Ho's eyes was the experience with his previous company. He worked as a general director there.

"What types of work had you done in your previous position as a general director?"

"I managed various types of work, such as general affairs, legal matters, managing and repairing facilities, managing workers, etc. I took care of everything that was left out by other departments."

A female worker brought hot tea to Gun-Ho's office.

"Please have some tea, and let me know if you need anything else."

"Thank you."

The man, called Hyeong-Sik Yoon carefully picked up the cup of tea. This man graduated from the top university in Korea—Seoul National University and worked at an executive level in big and mid-sized companies, and he seemed to

be nervous with Gun-Ho; he was even breathing very carefully. On the other hand, Gun-Ho seemed relaxed. He was leaning half back in his chair with his legs crossed while having his tea. The 35 years old man who used to work as a factory worker looked so arrogant in front of the 50 something-year-old man who graduated from the top university and who used to be a director in a big company.

Gun-Ho thought of the thing that the fortune teller from Gangnam—Master Park had told him years ago.

"You will be extremely rich before you turn 35 years old and you will rule the world. You will be in a position of hiring the people who graduated from top universities, in a position like the president of a big company."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

Gun-Ho sipped his tea and then said while relaxing his legs.

"I recently acquired this company, so it is not very organized yet. The system is not stable and we are in the process of implementing policies and stuff. We can't pay you much either."

"If you give me an opportunity to work here, I will work hard and do my best, sir."

"Our internal auditor here insisted that we have to have you in our company."

"Thank you."

Hyeong-Sik Yoon bowed low to show his appreciation.

"Once you join our company, I want you to take over 5 departments which are general affairs, facility management, treasury, management, and legal. Your position title will be a general director."

"Thank you, sir."

"You will have tons of opportunities to promote with our company."

"Thank you."

"Okay. Then, why don't you, Mr. Internal Auditor introduce our new general director to other managers and directors?"

"Yes, sir."

The internal auditor smiled and held the General Director's arms and walked out of Gun-Ho's office.

Gun-Ho received a call from the bank branch manager from the Gangnam branch.

"We just received the decision from our head office. We will move all of your loans to our bank, specifically to our Gangnam branch. You will see a dramatic reduction in your monthly loan interest starting next month."

"Thank you so much. I really appreciate it."

"We usually don't take this much loan for one company. Our branch will have to make a report about any changes in your company to our head office on a regular basis, so you will have to send us your company's quarterly financial reports."

"Understood. We will do that."

"Also, the head office will send someone to your company to verify a few things. You will have to be smart in answering any questions that they will ask you."

"Okay."

"We left out the loan from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund though. If we take over that loan, the loan we are currently giving you will exceed the appraised value of your company's real estate assets."

"Hmm."

"I understand that you want to get rid of that loan because there was joint surety involved. But you will have to find another way to take care of it."

"Okay."

"Also, since you sold the storage building and the dormitory, we used the new factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan that you recently purchased as collateral. Please verify the real estate registration of that factory."

"I see."

"Also, if you could give me a chance to have a round of golf with you in Asan City or Cheonan, I will be there."

"Haha, sure."

Gun-Ho called for the internal auditor.

"I just received a call from the bank in Gangnam. The loan with them is approved. So our entire loan is now with that bank."

"Really? Congratulations, sir."

The internal auditor smiled broadly.

"Starting next month, our monthly loan interest will be much less than before. So we can expect to have ordinary income, even though it won't be much."

"Well, at least we won't lose money. You did a really good job in this matter, Mr. Internal Auditor."

"Thank you so much, sir. I guess it was teamwork—you and me."

"Today is a good day; we received good news and we have a new general director. Why don't we have lunch together with all directors?"

"Yes, sir. I will let them all know."

179 Company Restructuring 5 – PART 2

GH Mobile had 5 directors. They all got together and went to a Korean Galbi* restaurant in downtown, Asan City.

Gun-Ho, the chief officer of the research center, internal auditor, plant manager, sales director, and the new general director sat at the restaurant and had Galbi. They were all in their 50s or 60s except Gun-Ho.

"Why don't we have soju?"

"It will turn our faces red."

"We can stop by the Asan Bay area and get some fresh air after lunch before going back to work. That will sober us up."

"Since our president allowed it, let's have a drink."

The sales director showed the highest alcohol tolerance among the party. Having a drink was actually part of his job in selling the products to potential customers. He also had excellent conversational skills. On the other hand, the two executives in their 60s—the chief officer of the research center and the plant manager didn't seem to enjoy the meeting. The research center's chief officer eventually asked Gun-Ho after finishing a glass of soju.

"I have a question I'd like to ask President Goo."

"Sure, go ahead."

"There was a rumor that once we move to a new location, the research center will be closed. Is that true?"

"We don't have a specific plan like that; however, we will consider the possibility."

"I suggest you reconsider your decision on dissolving the research center."

"Can you show that the research center is producing any beneficial outcome for the company, so it is absolutely worth keeping the center?"

"That's... umm..."

"Well, nothing hasn't been decided yet. We will have to review all the possibilities. Let's continue to enjoy our drink for now. Haha."

"I know I can't just ask you to keep the research center without showing anything. However, even though you decide to dissolve the center after your review, I'd like you to take care of the workers there."

"What do you suggest in 'taking care of them?'"

"I can retire since I almost reached the age, but there are many young workers in the research center, who still need to support their family."

"Hmm."

"I believe they deserve the second change by being reallocated to other new departments instead of just being laid off. It would be fair that way."

"Hmm. I do admire your care towards the workers, Mr. Chief Officer. I understood your concern. Even though the decision is not made favorably towards the research center, I will not just lay the workers off."

"Thank you, sir."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

The chief officer of the research center seemed to feel a sense of relief.

"Why don't you have more Galbi, Mr. Plant Manager? How're your teeth?"

"I still do have good teeth."

The sales director made a joke.

"Big brother, if you still have good teeth, then you should be good down there too."

Everyone at the table laughed.

The plant manager handed an empty glass to Gun-Ho, and said,

"I guess I won't be able to assist you for more than a couple of months, sir. I really wanted to stay here and worked for you for a long time; however, I am getting old and it's my time to retire soon."

"You are already reaching the age of retirement?"

"Yes. I will be with the company until the month after next month. It's already time to retire."

"Hmm."

The sales director tried to make the plant manager feel better by saying,

"Brother, be cheerful. Life after retirement is a new real life. Your new life starts soon."

"Have you thought about what you want to do after retirement?"

"No, nothing. I guess I will have to stay with my wife all day long."

"Hmm."

The plant manager looked like he was withering. Gun-Ho felt bad about it; however, that didn't mean he wanted to let him stay in the company for additional years. Gun-Ho couldn't put his company at risk by holding old workers who no longer could efficiently perform their duties.

Gun-Ho said slowly with his arms crossed.

"What if we do this?"

"What, sir?"

"After you retire, you can go to the factory in China and work there for one more year like a temporary work."

"To China?"

"Our newly acquired factory in China doesn't have enough skilled workers yet. Why don't you stay there for about a year and give them technical advice and also educate the workers there?"

"That sounds great. Thank you."

The plant manager's face became brightened.

Min-Hyeok called Gun-Ho to let him know that the factory in China received the certifications for both their quality management system and environmental management system.

"Our factory in China received ISO 90001 and ISO 14000."

"Aren't they the certifications for the quality management system and environmental management system?"

"That's right. We just have them certified."

"It must have cost money to get them certified, and also we need to maintain the system at a certain level and that will cost money too, right?"

"I've been trying to earn more business with local automobile manufacturing companies. They told me that in order to register as their vendors, we need to receive ISO 90001 and ISO 14000. That's why I applied and have them certified."

"Haha. You are the expert in that field. You used to work at a quality assurance department in a company in Korea. That work experience came in handy."

"However, there is something troubling."

"What is it?"

"The Chinese workers here, they handle the machines so carelessly. That really upsets me."

"How serious is it?"

"They are producing so many defective products, and the machines got broken

down way too often."

"Hmmm, that is troubling."

"It drives me crazy."

"You know what? Our factory manager here will retire soon. So I was thinking that maybe he could work at the factory in China for a year or so temporarily."

"The plant manager?"

"He has been with the machines in his entire life. He will be very helpful there in managing the factory and also managing the workers there. He can educate the factory workers."

"That sounds really great. Please send him here as soon as you can."

"Okay. I will send him there as soon as he retires."

"I will talk to you again later, once I make a contract with local companies."

"Sounds good. Keep up the good work, Min-Hyeok."

Gun-Ho called for the new general director—Director Yoon.

"We have a new factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City, which we recently purchased at the auction. Have you visited there?"

"I've heard of it, but I haven't had a chance to visit the factory."

"Why don't you go there with me today?"

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho headed to Jiksan Town, Cheonan City with Director Yoon.

An old security guard of the factory ran towards Gun-Ho to greet him when he saw Gun-Ho came to the factory. He had been guarding the empty factory.

"Sir."

"How are you? Would you open the factory for us please?"

The security guard unlocked the factory door so Gun-Ho's car could enter the factory yard.

"Wow. It is huge."

"It's about 5,000 pyung large. There are weeds growing here already. Hmm."

"The location is excellent. It's on the main road."

"That's why I grabbed this factory when I saw it."

"It must cost you a fortune to buy this."

Director Yoon looked around the factory thoroughly.

"The overhead crane is getting rusty. That's a shame."

"I want to build a new factory here, about 2,000 pyung large factory."

"Did you say 2,000 pyung? Wow. That will cost you a lot."

"According to the internal auditor, I will have to expect the construction costs of about 2 million won per pyung."

"Hmm, that's about right."

"You, Director Yoon has extensive experience in building a factory, right? You used to work in a construction company."

"That's right."

"Can you take over the work here to oversee the construction of our new factory?"

"Oh, me?"

"We will have to demolish the existing factory first. You can find a subcontractor to do the work."

"Yes, sir."

"Also, you will need to find a construction design company."

"I know many people in that field."

"I want a highly advanced factory that can effectively manage dust, temperature, and humidity."

Note *

Galbi — Korean grilled beef ribs.

180 State-of-the-Art Factory

Construction 1 – PART 1

As Gun-Ho instructed, Director Yoon started demolishing the existing factory in Jiksan Town.

One day, Gun-Ho came to the factory to see the progress of his new factory. When Gun-Ho arrived at the factory, Director Yoon quickly came out of the container office to greet Gun-Ho.

"You shouldn't come here, sir. During the demolition, it's not safe for you to be here, not to mention the dust it creates."

Despite Director Yoon's warning, Gun-Ho wanted to see the construction field, and he went there again a few days later.

"Huh? The factory is gone."

There was nothing on the land.

"The design drawing for the new factory is complete. The factory is divided into three sections. Two of them will be used for production. It will have a high ceiling over 5 meters high"

"Hmm."

"The management will be located on the second floor, and the company cafeteria will be on the first floor underneath the management office."

"Hmm."

"There will be a pine tree planted in front of the management office as part of the landscaping. A power transformer will be located above the management office. A waste disposal site will be placed behind the production department."

"Hmm."

"We also made a pond outside the back door. We will landscape that area with natural stones and water plants."

"Why are we putting the pond outside the back door? We should place it in front of the management department so we all can enjoy the pond view, shouldn't we?"

"Haha. The pond is placed there for the purpose of water quality certification."

"We need to get a certification?"

"We will let our industrial wastewater flow into the pond. Since we will have fish in the pond, it will show that our wastewater is treated to the level safe enough for fish to live in."

"Hmm."

"If you approve the plan, please sign on the first page of the design drawing. I will then have the construction get started right away."

Gun-Ho signed on the paper vigorously in front of several people.

Gun-Ho received a call from his sister.

"Gun-Ho, how are you? I know you are very busy running your business. I just wanted to let you know that next Saturday is our father's 70th birthday. I know I am not a good cook, but I want to invite some relatives to our house and have a birthday party for our father."

"Oh, really? I didn't realize his 70th birthday is coming this quick. Thank you, sister, for letting me know and for taking care of it."

"So come home to Incheon City on Saturday, okay? I don't even remember your face anymore."

"Of course. I don't go to work on Saturday anyway. I will be there. I guess I can pay for our parents' travel expenses so they can go on a trip to celebrate father's 70th birthday."

"That sounds great."

Gun-Ho gave a call to his office in Seoul—GH Development. Ms. Ji-Young Jeong picked up the phone.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Oh, sir!"

"How have you been?"

"It's going well here... Since Manager Kang posted our advertisements on blogs about our OneRoomTels, the vacancy rate has reduced a lot."

"Really? Haha."

"When are you coming back to Seoul, sir? We miss you."

"I am actually calling today to ask you to do something for me. My parents will go on a trip to Europe; my father will turn 70 in a few days. So can you find a cruise travel package for my parents to Europe? They can depart two weeks after next Saturday."

"Yes, sir. I will find a good one to Europe in that time frame."

Since Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong didn't have much work at the office, whenever Gun-Ho asked them to do something, they got so excited. Just a moment later after getting off the phone with Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, she called Gun-Ho.

"I talked to a travel agency."

Ji-Young gave the departure date and price to Gun-Ho for the cruise travel to Europe.

"Looks good. Please get two tickets for that trip. We have enough money in our company account to pay for the tickets, right?"

"Yes, all the rents from OneRoomTels are accumulating in our business bank account."

"Once you get the tickets, please mail it to me at Asan City by express mail."

"Yes, sir."

There was a meeting held by the city at Onyang Hotel. It was for the business owners and presidents.

"If you are building a cleanroom for your factory, Small and Medium Enterprise Support Center will provide a support fund. Also, for those of you who are trying to get an international certification for advanced technology or get a patent, our city has a support program."

Gun-Ho was listening to the presentation of a staff from the city while dozing off. He, then, received a call from an unknown number. He didn't answer the phone because it probably would be a spam call.

When he was on his way to the bathroom during his break time, he received a call again.

"The caller is calling from a cell phone. Who is this?"

He answered the phone this time,

"Hello?"

The caller took a moment before beginning to talk. He sounded gloomy and depressed.

"Gun-Ho? It's me, Jae-Sik Moon."

He was that guy who swindled 100,000 won out of Gun-Ho. He deceived Gun-Ho that he needed that money to make a high school alumni directory book. Gun-Ho didn't ask him about it.

"Oh, Jae-Sik Moon? What's up?"

"I'm sorry, Gun-Ho. I shouldn't have done that to you."

"What are you talking about?"

Jae-Sik let out a deep sigh before he continued to talk,

"I know our classmates from high school must have been talking about me by now."

"I have no idea what you are talking about."

"I couldn't make the alumni directory book I told you about the other day. I was actually going to make it, but I couldn't because of my situation. I hope you understand."

"Really? If you say so, then okay."

Jae-Sik Moon let out another deep sigh.

"What's wrong with you? You used to be really talented when we were in high school. You were the best in the literature club in high school."

"As a matter of fact, I am a person with a bad credit score, and I can't find a job. So, I was wondering if you have any residential manager position available in one of your OneRoomTels. I've heard that you have several of them."

"A residential manager position?"

"Yes. I just need a place to stay. I know I shouldn't ask you for another favor after the alumni directory book incident. I heard you are doing very well among our high school friends. I am just so desperate right now, so I am calling you to ask if you could help me. I've been thinking a lot and hesitated to call you..."

"Are you studying for the government exam right now?"

"No, I don't. I just have no place to go."

Gun-Ho could hear Jae-Sik sobbing over the phone. Gun-Ho had mixed feelings.

"I heard you worked in a delivery company."

"Right. I used to work there before I got fired because I made some mistakes there. And then, I started selling stuff and eventually went broke. I got divorced as well."

Jae-Sik seemed to become emotional as he was telling his life story, and he

sounded like he would start crying anytime soon.

181 State-of-the-Art Factory

Construction 1 – PART 2

"Are your parents still in Incheon City?"

"Yes, they are. My father became a person with a bad credit score as well. He hadn't done well with his work either."

"Hmm."

When Gun-Ho was thinking for a moment, Jae-Sik started talking again.

"I'm sorry, Gun-Ho. I understand you can't really say anything to me. I guess I asked you too much. All my other friends I called earlier, they just hung up on me as soon as they heard my voice. But you listened to me. I appreciate that. Thank you. I will let you go then."

Jae-Sik was about to hang up the phone when Gun-Ho quickly said,

"Hold on!"

Gun-Ho didn't let Jae-Sik hang up the phone.

"Come down to Asan City... I mean, to Jiksan Town, in Cheonan City."

"Jiksan Town?"

"Yeah, Jiksan Town in Cheonan City."

"Whew. I don't even have money for bus fare. Why do you want me there?"

"Take a subway to Jiksan Town. You might find a place to work there."

"Nah, I don't think so. Since I have a bad credit score, no one would hire me. Even though someone hires me, my salary will be seized."

"Just trust me on this, okay? Come to Jiksan Town."

"You have something like OneRoomTel there?"

"Just come, okay? I will see you at the Jiksan station at noon tomorrow."

"Okay... Thank you."

The next morning, when he arrived at his office, Gun-Ho called for the accounting manager.

"If a person with a bad score got a job, will all of his salary be seized?"

"Not exactly. They will seize his wage after subtracting his basic living expenses."

"How much would the basic living expenses?"

"It would be probably 1 million won or 1.2 million won. I don't have the exact figures. It should be around that amount."

"So, if a person with a bad credit score is being paid 2 million won per month, and if that person's basic living expenses are 1.2 million won, then 800,000 won will be seized."

"That's right."

"Hmm."

"We used to have a lady worker here in the production department, whose salary is being seized."

"Really?"

"She at first asked us to pay the salary with her mother's name to her mother's bank. However, we didn't do it. That is illegal."

"Hmm."

"That worker eventually quit the job."

"Hmm. I see."

Gun-Ho did a cursory review of the report in the morning before he headed to Jiksan Town. When he entered into the construction site of his factory in Jiksan Town, Director Yoon who was wearing a safety helmet and boots ran to Gun-Ho.

"Sir."

"They dug up deep."

"Yes, they are going to put reinforcement steel there."

"Are those workers over there on a salary?"

"Some of them are paid on a salary, but many of them are paid daily by the subcontracting company."

"Hmm."

"Do you have something you want to tell me, sir?"

"No, never mind."

Gun-Ho met Jae-Sik Moon at the Jiksan Station.

Gun-Ho almost couldn't recognize Jae-Sik and so did Jae-Sik.

Jae-Sik looked shabby and old; he looked like he was in his 40s. Moreover, he probably lost some weight; he looked small.

Jae-Sik couldn't recognize Gun-Ho at a glance. In his memory, Gun-Ho was a poor and shy kid from a poor family. He couldn't belong to any group in high school. However, Gun-Ho now looked totally different. He looked confident and did indeed look like a president of some company.

"It has been a really long time, Gun-Ho. I almost couldn't recognize you."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

Jae-Sik smiled but he looked sad.

"So do I. You changed a lot, Jae-Sik."

"How's your business with OneRoomTels?"

"It's going well. Jae-Sik, are you interested in working at a factory?"

"A factory? No one would hire me, and all of my salary will be seized."

"I actually have a factory, so I can give you a position. Also, I think I can do something about your salary seizure problem."

"Really?"

Jae-Sik seemed to be very interested now.

Gun-Ho took Jae-Sik in his car and went to an ox bone soup restaurant in Jiksan Town, close to Dong Seoul University.

"Let's have lunch first before we go to the factory."

Jae-Sik seemed to enjoy the ox bone soup a lot.

"Can I order one more bowl of cooked rice?"

"Of course. Eat as much as you want. I just need one bowl of cooked rice."

Gun-Ho looked closely at Jae-Sik who was having the ox bone soup. His jacket and shoes were old and shabby. Gun-Ho could see Jae-Sik's harsh life through his appearance.

'I can't believe this is that Jae-Sik Moon who was so talented and passionately participated in the literature club in high school. He was the best student in that club.'

After lunch, Gun-Ho headed to Asan City with Jae-Sik.

Jae-Sik didn't say anything on the way, and Gun-Ho also didn't say anything because he couldn't think of anything to talk about. Gun-Ho was thinking about what he should do with Jae-Sik; he could be troubling.

When they arrived at Gun-Ho's factory in Asan City, Jae-Sik was shocked. There were so many people working there with so many heavy equipments. He looked around the factory with his mouth open. Gun-Ho didn't take Jae-Sik to his office,

but instead, he took him to a small meeting room. He then asked for the production manager—Jong-Suk Park.

"Jong-Suk, do you remember Jae-Sik Moon? He used to live in a house with a blue-colored front door. This is him."

"Well, I think I saw him once, but I don't remember much about him."

Jong-Suk couldn't really remember Jae-Sik. Jong-Suk used to hang out with outgoing people like Suk-Ho Lee who was now running a bar in Gyeongridan Street. Jae-Sik used to spend a lot of time at home.

"Are you the son of the restaurant owner in Bupyeong District?"

Jae-Sik seemed to remember Jong-Suk.

Gun-Ho asked Jong-Suk,

"Is there any position that Jae-Sik could work in the production department?"

"There are plenty of positions available, but the question is whether this bro can handle the work."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"This is someone I know well, and he wants to work at our factory. Do you know any good position he could take?"

The general affairs manager asked Jae-Sik,

"Do you have any particular skills certificate?"

"No, I don't."

"You do have a driver's license, right?"

"It's suspended after I got involved in a car accident."

The general affairs manager suggested Gun-Ho,

"We have one open position for a security guard for the night shift. I think he can handle that work."

"Okay. Why don't you give him a list of papers he needs to prepare? Jong-Suk, find a place to stay for Jae-Sik. A OneRoomTel is good as well."

"Yes, sir."

The general affairs manager and Jong-Suk answered at once.

Jae-Sik seemed to feel better when he heard Gun-Ho asking Jong-Suk to find a place to stay for him.

Jae-Sik walked out of the meeting room with the general affairs manager.

Once Gun-Ho sent Jae-Sik to the general affairs manager's office, he came back to his office.

There was a missed call from Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim&Jeong Law Office on his cell phone.

Gun-Ho made a call to Attorney Kim.

"I'm sorry that I missed your call."

"You must be very busy, huh?"

"I'm good now. What's up?"

"I just received a call from Amiel in Tokyo."

"Really?"

"He was asking if you already develop the new product—AM083. He said you showed him the product drawing last time."

"How can we develop the product already? Dyeon didn't even give us an opportunity to make a sample product."

"Amiel said he has someone he wanted to recommend you meet with in order to resolve that problem."

"Recommending someone? Who is it?"

"He is a Japanese engineer who used to work for Dyeon in the U.S. He is now retired. He used to be the best engineer in Dyeon."

"Oh, really?"

"Amiel was asking if you want to get some advice from that engineer."

"Of course. I really need any help now."

"Okay, then. I will let Amiel know that you want that engineer."

182 State-of-the-Art Factory Construction 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a fax from Dyeon Japan.

It was about the Japanese engineer who Amiel was recommending, and also about his consultation price.

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is a Japanese engineer who had worked for Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle, USA for thirty years. He is one of the best experts in the urethane-related compound field in the world."

Gun-Ho leaned back in his chair in his office and read the fax that was sent by Dyeon Japan.

"He must be very good at his work with his extensive 30 years of work experience in this field. However, it's sort of expensive to invite him for consultation."

Gun-Ho read the fax further about the consultation fee.

"He will provide the consultation service for one month at 5,000 dollars. You will have to bear the travel expenses for him as well, such as the hotel, a flight ticket, food, rental car, etc."

There was one more requirement.

"You will provide Mr. Sakata Ikuzo an extruding machine for his use at least three hours per day. The raw materials for tests will be provided at your expense."

After reading the fax, Gun-Ho called for a meeting.

All of the five directors of GH Mobile attended the meeting: the internal auditor, the chief officer of the research center, the plant manager, the sales director, and Director Yoon who was in Jiksan to oversee the new factory construction. Gun-

Ho placed the fax on the table and started explaining the situation calmly.

"As you all remember, the vice president of S Company promised us last time when he visited us that if we could develop the new product—AM083—assembly according to their product drawing, they will buy the product from us. S Company is one of the biggest companies in Korea. Once we start manufacturing this product and selling them, our sales revenue will increase by 15% to 20%."

The plant manager chipped in.

"Of course it would be great if we are able to develop that product. However, we are not capable of developing that product. Well, I would say, with the current technology, any company in Korea wouldn't be able to develop it yet. Don't you think, Mr. Research Chief Officer?"

The chief officer of the research center responded.

"That... that's true."

The sales director was with Gun-Ho.

"If we could develop that product, it's not just going to be about increasing our sales revenue by 15% or 20% anymore. We will prove our technology and our ability to develop that sort of products to the field. It would make it a lot easier for me to sell our products."

The plant manager opposed the sales director.

"Don't you think we don't know that? The problem is we are not capable of making it."

"You didn't even try it yet."

The two men raised their voices.

The internal auditor was quiet since he didn't know much about the production field. The new general director—Director Yoon—also didn't even try to chip in because the product development or manufacturing was not his area of expertise; he would have had a lot to say about it if it was about construction.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

This time, the chief officer of the research center attacked the sales director—Director Kim.

"Hey, Director Kim. You can't just develop a product overnight just because you want it."

When Director Kim was about to fly into a rage and argue, Gun-Ho stepped in.

"I understand what you all meant. That's why I was thinking of inviting an engineer from Lymondell Dyeon to our factory. He is coming from Seattle in the U.S."

"An engineer from Lymondell Dyeon?"

"He is not an American, but he is Japanese. I was told that he is one of the best engineers in the chemical compound field. I think we can have him here for a month. My friend, Amiel—the president of Dyeon Japan—recommended him."

"It will probably cost a lot."

"The consultation fee for a month is 5,000 dollars. Since he is a retired engineer, his fee is not that expensive anymore."

"Don't we have to pay for his flight and hotel?"

"Right. Since we are developing a new product, I think we can bear some cost at this stage."

"Once a new product is developed, who will take ownership of that product?"

"I haven't discussed that part with them yet; however, the AM083 assembly is specifically designed for S Company's products so it won't sell to other companies. Therefore, we are more likely to own the product."

The sales director said to the chief officer of the research center.

"I guess you can provide consultation service to other companies too, once you

retire. Maybe you can make 5,000 dollars per month by doing that."

The chief officer of the research center didn't say anything back to the sales director, but he certainly looked pretty uncomfortable.

The chief officer of the research center then said,

"If that Japanese engineer comes here and runs some tests, we will have to provide him an extruding machine. If so, it will put our production temporarily on hold."

"That's right."

The plant manager confirmed the chief officer's concern.

The new general director—Director Yoon—carefully chipped in.

"Is it possible that we manufacture our products during the day, and do the tests at night?"

The plant manager seemed to get upset.

"Do you know what you are talking about? We turn off the extruding machine at the end of the day, and if we have to turn it on again, we will have to warm it up first, and there has to be someone who can assist in handling the machine. Who's going to stay at night to do that? Are you going to do it yourself?"

Gun-Ho said while releasing his arms from a crossing position.

"I've heard well from all of your opinions. We can talk further in detail about how we handle the use of the extruding machine after the consultant arrives. For today, let's focus on the issue of whether we want to invite the Japanese engineer or not."

"That should be decided by you, President Goo."

"We will follow whatever decision you make, sir."

"Okay, then."

Gun-Ho was having a cup of coffee after the meeting when he received a call

from Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Amiel told me that he sent you a fax. Did you receive it?"

"Yes, I received it, and I just had a meeting with my directors about it."

"Really? So are you going to invite that engineer for a consultation?"

"Yes, we will."

"Oh, you will? Then I will ask him to send you another fax of the consultation contract. You don't have to worry about the engineer. Amiel told me that he is the best. That engineer's brother is a professor of engineering at Tokyo University. He even received a Nobel Prize in physics. I guess the two brothers are very smart."

"Really?"

"Amiel said you will need an interpreter though, either Japanese or English. The engineer can speak English, but since he is a native Japanese speaker, you'd better find an interpreter who can speak Japanese."

"I see. I will find someone who can speak Japanese then."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs director.

"We will soon receive another fax from Dyeon Japan for the consultation contract. Once it arrives, seal the contract with our company stamp and send it back to them."

"Yes, sir. I will bring it to you so you can review it before I send it back to them."

"Also, find someone who can speak Japanese on WorkNet. We will need an interpreter for the Japanese engineer. We might need the interpreter at night, so find a male interpreter."

"How much do we want to pay him? And for how long do we need him?"

"Umm... let's have him for a month and tell him that we will pay him 3 million

won."

"Yes, sir."

183 State-of-the-Art Factory Construction 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho called for Jong-Suk.

"I found a room for Jae-Sik bro to stay into, sir."

"Don't sir me, dude. Stop playing when we are alone, okay?"

"But, sir. We are at work."

"I told you not to do that when we are alone."

"Someone might hear us talking..."

"Did you get him a room instead of a OneRoomTel?"

"The area is filled with factories, so it's hard to find a OneRoomTel in this area. There was someone who built a house like a OneRoomTel though and rent an individual room. The room is a bit smaller than a OneRoomTel, but it has all the necessary basic things in the room. The rent is 200,000 won per month. So we decided to rent it."

"Did Jae-Sik like it?"

"Yes, he likes it a lot. He wanted to say sorry to you."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Really? Okay."

"It's close to the factory; he can even walk to work. He can have his meals at the company cafeteria, so he won't have to spend much on his living expenses."

"Hmm. I see."

"Well, I'd better go now. We shouldn't talk alone like this too often. People might not like it. You are the president, and I am just a manager."

"Are you serious?"

"Yeah, we should be careful. There are 250 people working here. I already heard something from the head of the labor union."

"What did he say?"

"I shouldn't tell that to the president."

Jong-Suk bowed to Gun-Ho before he left the office.

Gun-Ho came out of the factory yard to get some fresh air. The workers in uniform who were passing by bowed to Gun-Ho when they saw him. The plant manager and Director Yoon were talking at the corner of the yard.

"Director Yoon, you haven't left the Jiksan construction field yet?"

"I was discussing the power transformer installation with the plant manager. I'm leaving now."

"I will go with you."

"Would you like me to take my car?"

"No, I will drive."

Gun-Ho and Director Yoon arrived at the construction site in Jiksan Town.

The workers in the construction field gave a bow to Gun-Ho. They sounded a bit different.

"Are there many Chinese people among the workers here?"

"The construction field is already dominated by Korean-Chinese. Many team leaders are Korean-Chinese as well."

"Are there no Koreans then?"

"The subcontracting company prefers young Chinese workers in their 30s or 40s rather than 60 years old Korean workers."

"What about Korean workers in their 30s and 40s?"

"The young Korean workers in their 30s and 40s don't work in the construction field. Most Koreans in the field are in their 60s or late 50s. The work is not always available for them either."

"Hmm. I see."

Gun-Ho thought that the men in their late 50s and 60s in Korea were having a hard time supporting their family.

Gun-Ho looked at the ground that was excavated.

"The concrete work is drying out. The reinforcement steel looks sturdy. What is that thing covered by a wood board?"

"It's mould. Once the concrete has dried out completely, they will be removed."

"Then they will construct a building on top of it?"

"That's right. It won't take much time to construct a building since we don't stack up bricks to build a wall, but we will use a pre-fabricated piece for the wall; we just assemble them."

"The president of the construction company wants to meet you to thank you, sir."

"He must be very busy. He doesn't have to come to see me. I just want him to build a strong factory for us."

"I will let him know."

When Gun-Ho drove out of the construction field, it was almost time to go home. So he didn't go back to the office, but instead, he went to a condo close to the KTX train station. He was staying there while he was in Asan City.

After having dinner in a restaurant in the vicinity of the area, he came back home and played a computer game. When it was around 8 pm, he felt a bit hungry. He

was thinking of going to a pub in front of the train station when Jae-Sik crossed his mind.

"He must be working as a security guard right now. I think I haven't really talked to him much. Maybe I should go to him now and see how he is doing with his new job."

Gun-Ho stopped by a convenience store to buy some beers and snacks such as dried squid and peanuts before heading to the factory where Jae-Sik was working at.

It was dark at the factory. The lights were all off except the security guard office and one small part of the factory where a few people were still working for the night work. Jae-Sik was sitting at the desk in the security office, and he was writing down something. He was wearing a uniform with a corresponding hat.

"Jae-Sik Moon!"

"Huh? President Goo? What are you doing here?"

Jae-Sik quickly stood up.

"Hey, how's work?"

"It's good. Thank you for the room too. It's a really nice room."

"I brought some beers and snacks to have a drink with you."

"I can't. I am on duty now."

"It's okay to drink with me; I am the president, remember? We won't have a lot of chances to drink like this."

"Then let's drink after the night shift workers go home. They will all leave work after about 20 minutes."

"And then you will be left here alone?"

"Yes. I work by myself after that hour."

"Aren't you scared of being alone out here?"

"Nah. I have all sorts of things I can use to protect myself. I have a flashlight, a stick, and a whistle. I have an emergency phone number to police as well."

"You haven't done this kind of work before, right? It must be hard for you."

"It's fine. I don't do much here. I just sit here most of the time and make patrols sometimes. That is good exercise."

While they were talking to each other, the light of the factory started being turned off.

"I guess the night shift workers are going home."

"Yeah, I guess so."

The night shift workers were passing the gate to go home, and they were surprised when they saw Gun-Ho in the security office.

"Sir?"

"I appreciate you all for your hard work."

They all gave a bow to Gun-Ho before heading to the parking lot.

"Okay, let's have a drink."

"I shouldn't drink while on duty..."

"It's okay. I just brought two cans of beer. One can of beer won't make you drunk. You should be fine."

"But still..."

"A long time ago, there was a meeting called 'Can Meeting' at the SK Group."

"What is it?"

"It was a meeting with colleagues. They sometimes got together with a can of beer and had a talk. With some alcohol, they tend to feel comfortable to talk about anything. The meeting started in order to have better communication, so they could get along better."

"Hmm."

"We don't have any problems between you and me. I just wanted to talk to you. So I brought some beer."

Jae-Sik felt emotional about Gun-Ho's care and thoughtfulness. Gun-Ho was driven and had good judgment, but he also tended to make other people feel comfortable.

"You must be very busy running this big company. You don't have to care about a security guard like me."

"That's not true. Being a president or a security guard is just a job title and the work you do."

Gun-Ho opened his beer can; it was foaming over with a sound.

"Let's drink."

Jae-Sik looked at Gun-Ho's face while drinking his beer.

"I feel like it is so mysterious that... how you could make that much money in a short period of time and acquire a company this big, and also purchase several OneRoomTels in Seoul."

"I was just lucky."

"Even I factor in the luck, I still don't understand. You are just incredible."

184 State-of-the-Art Factory

Construction 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho was having a beer with Jae-Sik at the security office in his company. It was all dark outside.

"You used to be very active in the literature club when we were in high school, and if I remember correctly, you also participated in making our school newspapers."

"Yeah, I did. After graduating from high school, I went to college in Seoul and majored in creative writing. It was not one of the top universities, but I had a good life at that time because I could do what I enjoy doing."

"That's right. I think I heard that you studied creative writing."

"I even won the annual spring literature contest after graduating from college, which was held by a newspaper company in a province. At that time I felt like I could rule the world. I wanted to get a job in a newspaper company, but I found a job at a publishing company instead."

"So you got a job where you can use what you learned in college and that was also what you liked to do with your life."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"As you know, a publisher is different from a factory like here. It was a small publisher with only three or four employees and it wasn't doing very well."

"Hmm."

"However, that publisher was publishing a few bestseller books at that time, so they could pay me even though it was not much. I met my ex-wife there too."

Jae-Sik's voice started shaking when he talked about his wife.

"Have some more beer."

"Sure."

Jae-Sik sipped his can of beer before he continued to talk.

"Did your wife work at the same publisher?"

"My wife was a poet. In order to make our livings, we both worked at the publisher as a freelancer doing proofreading and editing."

"Hmm."

"So we hit it off when we met. I was a chief editor at the publisher at that time. Unfortunately, the company could no longer find a good book that would generate enough revenue. Any subsequent books we published were sold less than 500 books at a maximum."

"Does it cost a substantial amount of money to publish a book?"

"Our company usually published foreign books. So it cost more than 10 million won to do the translation, editing, design and printing work."

"Wow, it does cost a lot."

"That company eventually had to close its business. I couldn't find a job in the field afterward because the publishing industry wasn't doing well at that time. So I made a living by doing editing. However, I don't know what happened to me; I guess I had to stay in the field doing editing even though I wasn't making much. But, instead, I opened a deep-fried chicken restaurant with a loan."

"Hmm."

"I put about 100 million won in that restaurant business including its premium. However, the restaurant strangely suffered from the beginning. Moreover, my wife became testy because of the customers who were rude and loud, and sometimes they harassed my wife, those low-lives."

"Hmm."

"She would have been able to take some stress that arose from the business if we were making good money. However, the business was suffering, and we were pressured by the creditors to repay the loan, on top of those abusive customers. My wife couldn't take it anymore. You know people who write like a poem, they are more sensitive than average people."

"Did your wife invest her money in the restaurant too?"

"She did. She took out the money from her credit cards here and there and invested 20 million won in the business. I also used my credit cards in addition to loan from a bank and put about 40 million won in the business."

"So, you started the business with your own cash of 30 million won."

"I had a severance pay of 5 million won that I received from the publishing company's president. He literally cried when he gave it to me. And I borrowed 10 million won from my mother. I used those 15 million won in addition to my own cash—another 15 million won."

"The debt was too high compared to your own investment fund."

"The debt grew like a snowball and we were behind our rent. It was that time when my wife eventually suffered a miscarriage of a baby; she asked me to divorce her."

"Whew. I had similar life experiences. You had a harsh time."

"I haven't heard from my wife for a while. She must still be suffering financially because of her credit card debt. She is probably having a hard life doing editing work."

"Hmm."

"When I eventually closed the deep-fried chicken restaurant, I was left with a debt of over 50 million won. I suffered for quite a while by the creditors before I became a person with a bad credit score."

"Why didn't you apply for rehabilitation?"

"I did. With rehabilitation program, I was supposed to pay off debts according to

a payment plan provided by the court. I was paying a certain amount of money to the court every month for several months until the accident happened."

"An accident?"

"I was doing the editing work, but when I couldn't get enough work to make a living, I got a job in a delivery company. I think I worked there for about half a year until the accident. I was delivering a package and I had to make a quick delivery, so I made a U-turn where I was not supposed to do and then I hit a car that was coming from the opposite direction. I crossed the yellow line to make a U-turn. I guess something happened to me that day to cloud my judgment."

"Hmm."

"I am not good at physical work since I have always done office work like writing and editing. Moreover, I had a bad credit score. So it was really hard to find a job. I saw Jong-Suk working with machines and doing welding. He looks great. I know I can't do that kind of work."

"So, you have 50 million won debt in total?"

"I have been paying for the debt until now. I think I have 30 million won left by now. Oh, I talked with the general affairs manager the other day about it. He said I would get paid 1.6 million won per month, and I can take the amount of basic living expenses out of it before it is seized. I think I can save some money then."

"Saving money?"

"Yeah. My rent is paid by the company, and I can have my meals at the company. So, I think I can pay off the debt after ten years working here."

"Right. The biggest expense that the people who don't make enough money is the cost of the rent. The people who don't have money have to pay for rent, and the people who have money receive that rent from them. That's the current economic system we are living in. Consequently, the gap between the rich and poor is getting bigger. Ten years are too long for you."

"Well, it is still hope. It's a good thing that the debt is shrinking instead of growing. There is one thing that bothers me a lot though. I collected some funds from our friends from high school to make an alumni directory book. I couldn't

make it happen even though I really was going to make it."

"People don't make those types of directory book nowadays, do they? Many people don't want to expose their real address."

"I know. So I was going to enter their e-mail address instead of physical addresses with phone numbers. I started collecting the necessary information and writing some stuff already like the history and path that our school took so far and news from our friends, etc. I still have the writings with me. It will cost 2-3 million won to complete it but I used that money to pay my rent because I was about to be evicted. I became an animal to our friends."

Jae-Sik eventually burst into tears.

185 State-of-the-Art Factory

Construction 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho felt mixed feelings and sadness.

Gun-Ho could understand how Jae-Sik had felt and the harsh situation that led to him here.

Other people who hadn't experienced extreme hardship like this wouldn't have understood Jae-Sik. Won-Chul Jo who was working in a big company and Suk-Ho Lee who was running a bar at Gyeongridan Street wouldn't have understood him.

"President Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Yeah?"

"Tell me about yourself, like how you accumulate your wealth. I just can't understand how it happened with my shallow common sense."

"Let's talk about my story next time. It's getting late."

"According to Jong-Suk, you used to work at a factory with him in Pocheon and Yangju."

"I did, with all my passion."

"You looked healthier and stronger too. You used to let Suk-Ho take your umbrella."

"You remember that?"

"I saw that. I was right there when Suk-Ho took your umbrella. Suk-Ho Lee, Won-Chul Jo, Byeong-Chul Hwang... those people were hanging out together when we were in high school. But you and me, we were loners. And we were poor."

"Haha. That's right."

"I also remember you getting beaten up by Won-Chul Jo. It's still vivid in my memory."

"I got beat up by Won-Chul?"

"Yeah, he beat you up because you talked bad about him behind his back. The thing he told you at that time hurt my feelings too."

"What did he say?"

"He said that 'you can never beat me with anything; you can't win in a competition for studying or a physical fight or anything.' He said that while beating you up. When he said it, he looked at me as well. That crept me out. That day, when I went back home, I resented God for the first time in my life."

"We were all young at that time. It happened during our adolescence. I don't even remember any of those."

"Yeah, we are better off with forgetting all those unpleasant things happened in our past. However, Won-Chul Jo and Suk-Ho Lee still ignore me and treat me like I am invisible. That hurts me. And now I made a mistake with the alumni directory book thing. I kind of gave them justification to treat me unfairly bad. I hate myself."

The beer that Gun-Ho brought was almost gone.

"Thank you for hearing me out today."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"I like the fact that you came this far even though you have suffered a lot. You will be fine."

Gun-Ho tapped Jae-Sik's shoulder.

"You are the most humane person among our friends from high school. Gun-Ho Goo, I knew you are a special person. Thank you."

"You don't have to go home now?"

"No, it's okay. The beer tastes really good today."

"I enjoyed the time with you too. I feel much better after telling my life story to you."

"I saw you writing down something at your desk earlier. What was it? Can I see it?"

"No, it's nothing."

Jae-Sik quickly put the paper inside the desk drawer and grinned. It was the first time in a long time when Gun-Ho saw him smile.

"Let's do this."

"What?"

"You just stay home during the day, right? Why don't you complete the alumni directory book? Since you already started writing things that would go in the directory book, it won't take you long to finish it, right? I will pay for the cost. I will pay you as a donation or a contribution to the work. Make a beautiful high school alumni directory book for us and send it to all of our high school friends."

"Umm, that..."

"Once you do it, they won't be able to say anything bad about you ever again."

"But..."

"And you said you have a debt of 30 million won left, right? I will pay for it, and I will take 500,000 won from your monthly salary. You can have a better life that way. You are being paid

1.6 million won per month and I will take 500,000 won out of it and you don't have to spend anything for the rent and for food. You should get out of that life as a person with a bad credit score. That holds you back in a lot of things in life; your salary is being seized, for example, right?"

"That's too much..."

"Don't say anything. Your life will be better and better. Just get me the current status of your debt tomorrow. Okay? I'd better get going now. Keep up the good work. Bye."

"Thank... Thank you, Gun-Ho. I will never forget this."

Gun-Ho received a call from the Korean restaurant owner in Akasaka, Japan—Ji-Yeon Choi. She said that the second payment day for the condo would be after three days.

"I will send you the amount of the second payment tomorrow."

"Oh, that early? But you might not be able to see Mori Aikko this time. She is in Kyoto."

"Kyoto?"

"Yes, there will be a festival there. Mori Aikko will do a performance in the shrine. She will perform Kitano Odori there."

"Really?"

"Mori Aikko is extremely popular these days. Because she now has a sponsor, she doesn't work in a bar as much as before. She now focuses more on dance performance at an outdoor stage."

"Hmm."

"I guess you can see her when you pay for the remaining payment of the condo. Hahaha."

"I need to see President Amiel from Dyeon Japan this time anyway when I go to Tokyo. I can see Mori Aikko later."

Gun-Ho wanted to see someone when he went to Tokyo. He wanted to see the retired Japanese engineer who President Amiel recommended—Mr. Sakata Ikuzo.

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim from China. He said that he made a new contract with a customer.

'He is working so hard since I told him that he would get a stock option. He is doing very well. I still remember him studying in a tiny room for the government job exam, like it was yesterday. He has changed a lot. Haha.'

"Deputy Mayor Seukang Li helped me a lot to get this contract this time."

"Seukang Li?"

"Remember that we received the certifications for the quality management system and environmental management system? Seukang Li requested that a window manufacturing company has to use products from a company that is certified with a quality management system."

"A window manufacturing company? Like the window for a condo?"

"Yeah."

"Do they use our products?"

"Yes. I didn't know that either. The price they offered was good, and it's not difficult to make the products they need. We already made the mould specifically designed for that product."

"Did you already make a sample product?"

"Yes. They approved the product. The workers here are so excited."

"I see. That's really great. At the end of the year, have a Chinese accountant do the year-end financial statement."

Min-Hyeok was being paid 20,000 Yuan per month, and he spent 10,000 Yuan for his living expenses in China and saved the remaining 10,000 Yuan. It was about 1.8 million won.

"We might make a profit of 10 million yuan this year. Then I can get 500,000 Yuan as a stock option."

Min-Hyeok took out an electronic calculator to calculate the exact amount.

"It will be about 90 million in Korean Won. Hahaha. I will have an additional 90 million won. Yippee! I make an extra 90 million won in addition to my annual salary. It was the right decision that I quit trying to get the government job."

Min-Hyeok felt more motivated once he knew how much he could make more.

Gun-Ho called for the general affairs manager.

"Mr. General Affairs Manager is away from his office right now."

"Who am I speaking with right now? Are you the assistant general affairs manager?"

"Yes, I am."

"Please come to my office."

The good-looking assistant general affairs manager entered Gun-Ho's office. He was the same age as Gun-Ho and he graduated from Dankook University in Cheonan City.

"I will go on a business trip to Japan three days later. Please get a flight ticket for me."

"Yes, sir."

The assistant general affairs manager didn't leave but he seemed to have something to say.

"Umm, sir."

"Yes? Do you have something you want to tell me?"

The assistant general affairs manager pulled out a wedding invitation from his pocket.

"I am getting married next month."

"Oh, really? Congratulations."

Gun-Ho quickly stood up and offered his hand to him for a handshake.

"I will ask all the management and executives to attend your wedding."

"Thank you, sir."

The assistant general affairs manager gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho.

After the assistant general affairs manager left the office, Gun-Ho looked at the calendar and he was frightened.

"Shoot! My father's 70th birthday is tomorrow. I almost forgot!"

186 World-Renowned Engineer 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho went to the condo in Guweol Town, Incheon City, where his parents were living.

There were already a lot of people in the condo when he arrived there. He could know that by looking at the significant number of shoes at the entrance.

"Gun-Ho is here!"

"Gun-Ho is here!"

The people who were sitting in the living room all stood up to see Gun-Ho.

"Hello."

Gun-Ho gave a deep bow to the relatives. His parents were smiling at Gun-Ho; they were wearing a traditional Korean dress. Gun-Ho thought it was an outdated idea to wear traditional Korean dress at his own birthday party.

"The real head of the household is here!"

It was Gun-Ho's aunt who said that in a loud voice. She looked older than the last time he saw her.

As the relatives guided, Gun-Ho poured liquor to his parents' glasses and gave them a full bow.

"Gun-Ho has grown up so great. I am envious of them to have such a great son."

"You should get married soon, Gun-Ho. You are making good money now. The only missing thing in your life is your wife and children."

After Gun-Ho's full bow to his parents, his sister and her husband and their daughter—Jeong-Ah, gave a full bow to the parents. Jeong-Ah looked prettier than the last he saw her. She seemed to be shy to say hello to her uncle.

"I heard that you won a piano contest, Jeong-Ah."

"Yes, I did."

Jeong-Ah was calmer than before.

They started having food. Gun-Ho's uncles poured liquor to his glass.

"Are you dating anyone?"

"Yes."

Gun-Ho answered without thinking carefully. Gun-Ho was thinking of Mori Aikko who was then doing a dance performance for Gion Matsuri in Kyoto.

"You are running a big business, right?"

"Yes, I have a parts manufacturing company in Asan City."

"You remember your cousin—Jae-Choon, right?"

"Of course, I know Jae-Choon."

"He is currently unemployed. Get him a job at your factory."

"Huh? Oh, okay."

Gun-Ho's aunt shouted when she heard the conversation.

"Big brother, you are not supposed to ask some favor to Gun-Ho today. Today, we are here to congratulate his father's 70th birthday."

"This is a good day to talk about it with Gun-Ho. You are saying that because your son has a stable job in the government, huh?"

"What are you talking about? Are you drunk, brother?"

Since the aunt's voice was louder than the uncle's, the uncle stopped saying anything back to her and kept drinking his liquor.

Gun-Ho asked his aunt in a quiet voice,

"Jae-Woong is doing good, with his work at the Department of Labor, right?"

"Yeah, he is doing great."

As she talked about his son, for some reason, her lips were set in a pout of annoyance. Gun-Ho's sister who was sitting next to him tapped his arms and said,

"The aunt is not getting along with her daughter-in-law."

"Oh, with Jae-Woong's wife?"

"Yeah, I heard she is arguing with her daughter-in-law all the time."

Gun-Ho was not surprised. He thought that made sense considering her personality. His aunt had a strong character different from his mother.

"Gun-Ho, you didn't come to your father's 70th birthday party empty-handed, right?"

The aunt shouted again with her loud voice.

"Oh, sure. I brought a present for my parents."

Gun-Ho pulled out an envelope with two tickets of cruise travel and handed it to his father.

"What is this, son?"

His parents opened the envelope.

"What is it? Is it a gift card for shoes or something?"

Gun-Ho's aunt asked.

"No, they are tickets for my parents' cruise travel."

"Cruise travel?"

When one of the uncles who were drinking liquor asked out of curiosity, the aunt shouted again.

"Big brother, you don't know what cruise travel is? It's a trip by a huge ship. If you don't know about it, just keep drinking your liquor. Don't chip in."

Gun-Ho's aunt seemed to be very uncomfortable about something that day. She looked sulky.

"Wow, cruise travel? I am so envious."

A young aunt said while clapping. The other people at the birthday party all laughed and clapped with that aunt.

"Thank you, son."

Gun-Ho's mother held Gun-Ho's hand.

Gun-Ho headed to Japan to make the second payment of Mori Aikko's condo. He went to the real estate office with Ji-Yeon Choi in her car and made the payment.

"I will get you the receipt."

The sales agent gave the receipt to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was impressed by the agent's handwriting. He was writing quickly from the top to bottom on a paper to complete the receipt form, but the writing was very straight without any single letter stuck out.

Ji-Yeon Choi also gave to Gun-Ho the promissory note that Gun-Ho had handed to her when she paid for the condo's down payment on behalf of him. Gun-Ho smiled and tore it out—that promissory note of the amount of 10 million Japanese Yen.

"I wish Mori Aikko was here, but she is at the Gion Matsuri in Kyoto."

"It's fine. I like it better that she is honing her dancing skills and spends time there for her personal self-development."

"Mama-san Segawa Joonkko told me that Mori Aikko is making rapid progress in her dancing every day. She said Mori Aikko could do so because she has a good sponsor now."

"Haha. I think she makes it happen with her sheer effort."

"Are you heading to the Nihonbashi area where President Amiel's office is located?"

"Yes, I am."

"Do you have an interpreter?"

"Yes, our sales director's nephew is studying in Japan. He will do the interpretation for me. He will be waiting in front of the Nihonbashi office for me."

Gun-Ho met the retired engineer—Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who used to work for Dyeon, at the Dyeon office in Nihonbashi. He was wearing thick glasses and he was skinny; he looked stubborn. Right, he looked like a stubborn engineer. He looked about 65 years old and he smelled like a metal powder. Amiel introduced Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, this is Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who used to be the best engineer in Dyeon."

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo. Very nice meeting you."

"I'm Ikuzo."

"Did you have a chance to look at the product drawing?"

"Yes, I did. Don't build a mould for that product. I will make it manually."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"With your hands? Moulds are all built by machines these days."

"I always do it manually."

"If you make a mould manually, would it be precise enough? Isn't it an outdated way to make a mould?"

"The mould I made with my hands is still being used to manufacture products

that are supplied to the world-known Boeing Company."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo closed his mouth after mentioning his mould for Boeing Company and didn't say anything anymore.

Amiel tried to change the mood.

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is a very well-known engineer to Dyeon and Boeing as well. His younger brother is a world-renowned physicist who received the Nobel Prize."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho understood that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was a highly talented and respected engineer, but he seemed to cling to old ways.

"Do you think it is possible to develop the product shown on this product drawing?"

"Yes, it seems to be doable."

"How can you be so sure?"

"When I make something, I Isshokenmei."

"Isshokenmei?"

The interpreter explained the meaning of it.

"Isshokenmei means the person risks his life. In other words, he meant he put everything into developing a product, to the extent that he risks his life."

"Risking his life?"

Gun-Ho was very impressed by the engineer's attitude towards his work. Gun-Ho also risked his life when he invested in the stock market! Gun-Ho laughed out loud.

"Hahaha. You are indeed the world-renowned engineer. Okay. I am inviting you to Korea. I will provide you everything you need."

187 World-Renowned Engineer 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho stayed in New Otani Hotel in Akasaka. Tomorrow, he had to go back to Korea. He suddenly missed Mori Aikko so much. Gun-Ho gave a call to the general affairs manager in Korea.

"I want to extend my trip for one more day. I will return to Korea the day after tomorrow."

"Okay, sir."

The next day, Gun-Ho didn't return to Korea but instead, he went to Kyoto without telling anyone. The emperors of Japan used to live in Kyoto. Gun-Ho headed to Okazaki Park where the festival was held in. There were posters here and there about the festival. A pretty geisha in colorful Kimonos posed with a traditional Japanese oil-paper umbrella in her hand on the poster. When Gun-Ho looked at the festival poster closely, he was astonished. It was Mori Aikko on the poster.

"Wow. It is indeed Mori Aikko."

Gun-Ho smiled.

There were so many people at Heian Shrine in Okazaki Park. They all seemed to be there for the festival. Many photographers were standing in front of the shrine with their cameras ready. Behind the group of photographers, there was a huge crowd of general spectators, and Gun-Ho was inside the crowd.

With the sound of a drum, the festival started. Music started and a group of dancers in a white outfit came out to the stage. They were dancing geishas.

"Kirei na (Pretty)!"

"Kirei na (Pretty)!"

People kept shouting 'Kirei na.' The dancer in the center of the group was Mori Aikko.

"That's her!"

The photographers started shooting pictures of Mori Aikko. Mori Aikko was wearing thick geisha makeup; she didn't wear that makeup when she danced in the bar. The spectators participated in taking pictures of Mori Aikko with their smartphones. So did Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho took Mori Aikko's pictures with his cell phone.

The geishas were dancing along with the music that was played with some musical instruments that Gun-Ho didn't really recognize. Her dance was different from the one she performed at the bar. It was a really beautiful artistic dancing. People there were so busy taking pictures of Mori Aikko's every move.

'That girl is my Mori Aikko!'

Gun-Ho felt like he was willing to give her everything he had. He would have given the world to Mori Aikko if he could.

Gun-Ho quietly walked out of Heian Shrine; he wanted Mori Aikko to enjoy her moment and didn't want to interrupt her activity. He, then, headed straight to the airport to take a flight to Korea.

A few days after Gun-Ho came back to Korea, he was told that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is soon arriving at the Gimpo International Airport.

Gun-Ho called for the general affairs manager.

"Did you find an interpreter?"

"Yes, I had him on standby."

"Why don't you bring him here?"

The general affairs manager brought a young man to Gun-Ho's office. The young man looked like three or four years younger than Gun-Ho.

"He will be interpreting for us. This is his resume."

The general affairs manager handed the resume to Gun-Ho.

"You went to college and graduate school in Japan. Since the person who is coming is an engineer, you will encounter many technical terms to interpret. I hope you are ready for it."

Since the interpreter would work temporarily for only a month, Gun-Ho didn't talk long with him.

"Mr. General Affairs Manager, let's send the assistant general affairs manager to the airport to pick up Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. It seems he has a nice car; he can bring that car to the airport."

"I think he is an adequate person for the work. He is good-looking and he has good conversational skills as well. He also has a sophisticated etiquette."

Gun-Ho asked for the assistant general affairs manager.

"Was your car Kia K7? It looked like a new car."

"It's actually a used car. It is less than 2 years old though."

"I want you to go to Gimpo International Airport to pick up someone. I will ask the general affairs manager to provide you enough gas. A very famous Japanese engineer is coming to our company for a consultation. His name is Sakata Ikuzo. Please take the interpreter with you. The person standing next to you is our interpreter."

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. General Affairs Manager, please reserve a room at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel for Mr. Sakata Ikuzo."

"It will be a long term stay, isn't it?"

"We expect him to stay here for a month, but it can change depending on how fast we can develop the product."

"Understood, sir."

In the afternoon that day, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo arrived at the factory in Asan City. Gun-Ho called for the directors to his office.

"This is Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. He will help us develop a new product. He used to work for Dyeon in the U.S. as the head of the engineering department."

The directors greeted Mr. Sakata Ikuzo and exchanged their business cards with him. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's business card showed only his name without any company or organization's name he worked for, maybe because he was a retired engineer.

Gun-Ho started assigning work to each director.

"Mr. Plant Manager, please give him a tour of our factory."

"Yes, sir."

"After the tour of the factory, please show him our research center as well. Mr. Chief Officer of the research center, you can show him around."

"Yes, sir."

"And find out whether he prefers to do his development work at the production field in the factory or in the research center."

"Okay."

The plant manager was walking out of Gun-Ho's office with Mr. Sakata Ikuzo when he asked Mr. Sakata Ikuzo his age in Japanese. The plant manager seemed to speak Japanese a little bit.

"How old are you?"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo answered while looking at the plant manager's business card.

"I'm 65 years old."

"You are three years older than me. I'm 62 years old."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

The two 60-something years old men looked at each other and laughed.

After having a tour both to the factory and the research center, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo decided to do his work at the factory where he could easily have access to the extruding machine.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo brought two big bags with him. He took out several vinyl bags of raw materials from one of his bags; the raw materials seemed to be about 5 kilograms.

"Do you have a team leader in the maintenance and repair department?"

"We have a production manager here, and he is very good at maintenance work as well."

The plant manager introduced Jong-Suk to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo unexpectedly smiled and offered his hand to Jong-Suk for a handshake.

"Can you set up a mould and things, so I can manually carve a mould."

"Sure."

Jong-Suk installed things for Mr. Sakata Ikuzo so he could easily start his mould work right away.

Gun-Ho received a call from Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Kim&Jeong Law Office.

"I heard the Japanese engineer arrived already."

"Yeah, he is here."

"Amiel called me and said that if the Japanese engineer succeeds in developing the new product, you would need to give him an incentive fee."

"Incentive fee?"

"His consultation fee is 5,000 dollars, but his incentive fee is 20,000 dollars. He won't claim any ownership of the new product then. He will give the full

ownership of the new product to GH Mobile."

"Hmm."

"Amiel asked our law firm to notarize the statement."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho took some moment before giving his answer.

"Okay. Let's do that."

188 World-Renowned Engineer 2 – PART 1

The plant manager came to Gun-Ho's office to give a report.

"DongHwa Electricity has reduced the product order dramatically. I think we'd better stop making those products for them."

"We are still selling the products to DongHwa Electricity, right? And that generates income even though it is not much."

"That's right; however, I think we need to reserve the extruding machine that has been used to manufacture those products to use exclusively for somewhere else."

"Is that because of the Japanese engineer—Mr. Sakata Ikuzo?"

"Yes. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo has been doing his work with an extruding machine at night because all of our extruding machines are fully occupied during the day. The workers who have assisted Mr. Sakata Ikuzo at night became very exhausted as well."

"Manager Jong-Suk Park has been assisting Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, right?"

"Yes, and there are two other workers who have been assisting him too."

"So, three workers have been assisting Mr. Sakata Ikuzo."

"They are not working with Mr. Sakata Ikuzo all day long though. They usually perform their job duties, and they only assist Mr. Sakata Ikuzo when he needs them."

"I see."

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo likes to work with Manager Jong-Suk Park. I think that's because Manager Jong-Suk Park is agile, and he is extremely good at the maintenance and repair work."

"I know he is good at the maintenance and repair work, but how is he doing in the production field? Isn't he inept at production?"

"Haha. No, not at all. Usually, skillful people quickly adjust to other areas even though that area requires different skills. He is very sociable as well. He calls anyone big brother if that person is older than him."

"Haha, really?"

"As to the extruding machine, I'm suggesting to reserve one extruding machine for Mr. Sakata Ikuzo exclusively."

"They don't have to work at night that away."

"Not exactly. Once they start developing products and getting busy, they will have to work without a break. So they will have to work at night too."

"I don't know much about how things work in the production field. I will let you decide on that matter."

"Okay, sir. Thank you."

After the plant manager left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho thought about Jong-Suk Park. Jong-Suk was like his little brother; they had been together for a long time in good days and bad days in life. He was like a comrade in life to Gun-Ho.

"Jong-Suk is almost perfect. The only problem is that he didn't finish his college education."

Gun-Ho was thinking that he would send Jong-Suk to college after Mr. Sakata Ikuzo completed developing the new product. Jong-Suk could take night classes so he could still work at Gun-Ho's company during the day.

"I am not sure if Polytechnics College offers night classes."

Gun-Ho searched on the Internet to see the programs that Polytechnics College offered.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was staying at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel, and Jong-Suk gave him a ride for his commute to work. They went to work at a certain hour every

day, but they often stayed at work till late at night. Sometimes they had to work all night. The interpreter also stayed with them according to their erratic work schedule. The interpreter was staying in a OneRoom close to the factory, but he had to use public transportation to commute.

The plant manager called for Jong-Suk.

"Manager Park, starting today, you can just focus on assisting Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. You don't have to work in the production or maintenance for now."

"But there is so much work in the production and maintenance."

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo wants your full assistance. Just do as he wants."

"Hmm. Does he think he can boss me around?"

"We can cover production and maintenance work with other personnel; we have team leaders and managers in those departments. It's not that bad to have a world-renowned engineer as your boss."

"It's strange. I don't understand why it has to be me who should assist him."

"That's because you are very good at work."

"Even though I work till late at night, I don't get paid for overtime because I am a manager. On the other hand, I heard Mr. Sakata Ikuzo will receive an incentive if he successfully develops the new product in addition to his consultation fee."

"If he could successfully develop our new product, all those money paid to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo would be worth it. It would bring substantial benefit to the company. You should think of the company's interest more. You are close to the president, right?"

"I'm concerned about the company's interest, of course. I just don't like the way Mr. Sakata Ikuzo works with the mould."

"What's wrong with his mould work?"

"It just looks shoddy."

"His mould is being used for Boeing's products."

"That's hmmm."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo called for Jong-Suk.

"Please do some welding work on the handle of this tool and fill the joint with rubber."

"Yes, sir."

"I will insert the mould that I just finished into the extruding machine, and you raise the temperature. Why don't you put these raw materials into the hopper? 5 grams of the black pigment, 4 grams of carbon power, and 1 gram of vulcanization accelerator,..."

"Sh*t, so many stuff go into the hopper. Hey, Mr. Interpreter, don't touch that thing. Step away from that machine!"

It seemed that the interpreter touched something out of curiosity. The machine made a loud noise before the pointer needle of the pressure gauge moved upward. The interpreter was frightened and quickly ran away from the machine.

Jong-Suk ran to the machine and pressed a few buttons to stop the machine.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"I'm... I'm so sorry."

The interpreter's face turned blue.

"You just do your job, okay? Just do the interpretation."

"Okay."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo called for Jong-Suk again.

"Fu*k! He is calling for me like every ten minutes. Don't interpret this to him."

The interpreter smiled.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo handed a strange-looking piece of metal to Jong-Suk.

"I just carve this out, but the surface is too rough. Can you smooth it out with sandpaper?"

"Okay."

Jong-Suk started working on the piece of metal while murmuring. The interpreter came close to Jong-Suk to watch him work.

"Stay away from me. This work creates tiny particles in the air."

In the afternoon that day, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo wanted to make a sample product for testing. He inserted the mould he had been carving out into the machine with the mixed raw materials that Jong-Suk made according to his instruction.

"Please check the temperature, coolant, compression speed, and expansion. Do not touch the machine or the mixed raw materials except Jong-Suk."

The sample product came out. It had white and yellow color on it. The yellow part was solid.

"The sample product is coming out!"

The workers in the factory all gathered in front of the machine to see the first sample product. The plant manager and the chief officer of the research center were there too.

"The mould looked so shoddy, but the product made out of that mould looked so nice."

"Look at this. This part is hard while the other part with a wing is soft."

The workers stared at the sample product in amazement.

"Don't touch it. It hasn't hardened yet."

Products made of plastic were soft when they did not solidify yet.

When the product solidified enough to be tested, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo measured its hardness with a durometer and measured its tensile strength.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo shouted at Jong-Suk,

"Manager Park, stop the machine!"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo let out a deep sigh.

"There is a problem with its degree of clearness. I think the mixture of magnesium carbonate caused it."

"It looks just fine."

The workers who were watching the product testing then said simultaneously,

"Soredewa Nai (It doesn't)!"

"I will have to taste it to be sure. I can't rely solely on the measuring device."

"Taste it?"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo cut the product with a scissor and took a piece of the product which was still a bit soft and put it in his mouth.

"Wow. He is really eating it. He can't swallow it. It's plastic. He is not supposed to eat it."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo kept chewing the product with his eyes closed. He looked like he was enjoying a piece of sushi or something. After chewing the piece of the sample product for a while, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo spit it out and said,

"We will have to add more magnesium carbonate and less oil to the mixture. Throw out all of the sample products we just made!"

"All of them? That's such a waste."

"Throw them all out!"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo flopped down on the floor; he looked exhausted.

189 World-Renowned Engineer 2 – PART 2

The next day, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo didn't do any work.

"We will resume the work after two days. I will have to get inspired first."

After that day, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo just sat in his chair and read a book; the way he sat quietly reminded Jong-Suk of a Buddha. Jong-Suk was wondering what kind of book Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was so into, but he couldn't figure it out since it was all written in Japanese and Chinese characters.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

The plant manager called for Jong-Suk.

"Hey, why aren't you testing the product?"

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is just reading a book for hours now."

"What book?"

"I don't know. He said he needs to be inspired or something before he could continue the work."

"Inspiration?"

"Yes, he said he needs inspiration."

"Ha. He is something!"

"Right. Japanese people are weird."

"Hmm, let me go and check what kind of book he is reading."

The plant manager went to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's desk.

"What are you reading, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo? Is it fun?"

"Oh, no... I just have to figure out something."

The plant manager seemed to know how to read some Chinese characters. He looked at the cover of the book to see the book title.

"The Book of Five Rings."

"That's right. It's the book of five rings."

"I think I heard of it from somewhere."

The plant manager tilted his head while thinking of the book. He then went to the chief officer of the research center.

"Do you know of a book called The Book of Five Rings?"

"Oh, umm... I think I've heard of it somewhere. Isn't it a martial arts novel?"

"He is reading a martial arts novel to figure out something at work."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo kept reading the book, and sometimes he stopped reading the book and seemingly thought about something with his eyes closed. And he resumed his reading after he was done thinking.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's reading and thinking process looked so weird to Jong-Suk.

"Is he reading Buddhist texts?"

Jong-Suk thought the reading might be part of his meditation, or it was some sort of religious practice.

The next day, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo continued reading the book without work until late at night.

"Fu*k! I want to go home. Should I wait until he finishes his reading for the day? I have to take him to his hotel. Sh*t."

"Me too."

The interpreter complained as well while standing next to Jong-Suk.

"At least your OneRoom is close to the factory. I have to drive all the way to my house. Fu*k."

Jae-Sik who was working night shift saw Jong-Suk grumbling.

"What's wrong?"

"That bossy Japanese guy doesn't want to go home yet. He is just reading a book, and I have to wait until he finishes his reading."

"Really?"

Jae-Sik started patrolling the factory. He checked every office with his flashlight. He was checking if an office's light was still on even though no one was working in that office. Jae-Sik stopped by the area where Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was reading his book. The interpreter was sitting a bit distant from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, and he was playing a game with his smartphone."

"You are reading a book, sir. Oh, it's The Book of Five Rings."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo looked at Jae-Sik who was wearing a security guard uniform.

"It's The Book of Five Rings written by Miyamoto Musashi."

The interpreter suddenly hit his forehead.

"That's right! The Book of Five Rings is a book written by Miyamoto Musashi! I remember it now!"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo lifted his head and looked at Jae-Sik again.

"Do you know of Miyamoto Musashi?"

"Of course. He was the best swordsman in Japan. He was a legendary samurai who had never lost in his 60 fights."

"Hmmm. You do know of him."

"The Book of Five Rings was written in his final years. It has been the best-

selling book for the longest period in online bookstores and amazon.com in the U.S. as a book for management. He was the master of Niten Ichi-ryu. I like him a lot."

"Oh, I see."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo scanned Jae-Sik from head to toe.

"It's a shame that he works as a security guard of a factory."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo murmured to himself.

Gun-Ho went to the construction field in Jiksan Town. When he entered the factory yard, Director Yoon ran to him.

"Wow. The building is almost complete."

"That's right. It's really quick to complete the building. It takes time to finish the interior though."

"Really?"

"This is the area where the production field will be; it will be divided into section A and section B. This area is the management office area. And, this is for a conference room, and that will be a company cafeteria and resting area. Please come with me. We haven't installed the guardrail for the stairs yet. You have to be careful when you use the stairs to walk upstairs."

Gun-Ho walked up to the second floor; he was wearing a suit and a safety helmet that Director Yoon gave to him.

"This is the management office area. That one will be your office, President Goo. There will be small and large meeting rooms. That will be the restroom."

Gun-Ho closely looked around the building. A pine tree was once planted in the front yard as part of the landscaping. The factory would look really nice once the construction was completed.

"Once we successfully develop our new product, one by one, we can take 1,000 employees in this factory, right?"

"Of course, sir. We would have enough space in this factory to take 1,000 workers. Moreover, we have a vacant lot over there, so we can always add more buildings at any time."

"What about the power and water supply? Are we getting enough of them?"

"Yes. The previous factory had high electric power capacity anyway, so we can continuously use it. As to the water, we are getting the water supply service, but we are planning to use underground water as well."

"Underground water?"

"Yes. There are tons of underground water in this area. So, we are thinking of utilizing underground water for our cooling facilities."

"Hmmm."

Gun-Ho nodded his head.

"Are we going to use cement for the floor?"

"The entrance area and the factory yard will be paved with asphalt."

When Gun-Ho came back to his office in Asan City, he called for his secretary.

"Please ask Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to come to my office."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo entered Gun-Ho's office.

"How's work? I just wanted to have a cup of tea with you."

"Thank you."

"I've heard that you are reading a book these days."

"Oh, yes, I've been reading the Book of Five Rings, which is written by an old Japanese swordsman. The book is very popular as a book for management nowadays."

"Really?"

"The Book of Five Rings is translated into English and is being sold on amazon.com. I recommend you read the book. I'd like to give my book to you, but it is written in Japanese, so it won't be very useful to you."

"I will read the book when I have the chance. Thank you."

"I get inspired by reading that book. The swordsman had 60 fights, and he had never lost in even a single fight. I also wanted to develop 60 new products, but it's not easy to achieve it."

"How many new products have you developed so far?"

"I've developed 20 products. It's not even close to 60."

"Haha. It must be very challenging."

"I've done reading the book, and I got the inspiration I need. I will start again developing the product tomorrow. I will succeed this time and will make you happy, President Goo."

"Thank you."

"By the way, you are a very lucky man, President Goo."

"Why do you say so?"

"You have two very good workers close to you."

"Are you talking about the plant manager and the chief officer of the research center? Or are you referring to the sales director?"

"No, I meant the production manager—Jong-Suk Park—and the security guard—Jae-Sik Moon."

"Huh? Those people?"

"I am not sure about their mindset on management, but I know that they are very good workers and professionals. They will assist you and will be a big help to you in the future, President Goo."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho thought about it while rubbing his nose.

190 World-Renowned Engineer 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho was reading an economic newspaper in his office when he received a call from Jae-Sik Moon.

"What's up?"

"I have something I want to talk to you about."

"Why are you calling? You could just come to my office to see me."

"I didn't want others to see me—a security guard—to enter the president's office. That could look inappropriate to other workers. So, I decided to give you a call instead."

"You don't have to worry about that kind of thing. So, what's up?"

"The high school alumni directory book is almost completed. I've already done proofreading and editing. The design for the cover is finished as well. It's ready to be printed out."

"Okay, that's good."

"I want to show it before I print it out."

"Haha. I don't have to see it. Just have a printing service company print it out. I am busy with my own work."

"I received the fund for the alumni directory book, which you sent to me. I will give you a report on the expenses' details later. I also received the amount of 30 million won that you sent me for me to pay off my debt. I did pay off all of my debt with that money."

"That's good."

"I will set aside 500,000 won from my monthly salary and send it to your bank

account that you gave me the other, every month."

"Sounds good."

"I am no longer a person with a bad credit score. I can freely get a service from a bank, and I don't have to worry about my salary being seized anymore."

"That's good, but will you be okay with your current salary? You won't have much left once you send me 500,000 won from your monthly salary."

"I am planning to look for an editing work that I can do during the day. Oh, maybe I shouldn't say that to my current employer. You might not like the idea that I have another work that I have to commit to."

"Haha. I don't mind at all as long as that doesn't affect your work with the company."

"Thank you. As to the alumni directory book, I will send one to you as soon as the printing work is completed."

"Sounds good."

Gun-Ho was thinking of Jae-Sik; the security guard position that he was currently working in didn't seem to fit his talent or interest.

"He can do better than a security guard work, but he is not an employee type either."

Gun-Ho couldn't yet figure out the perfect work position for Jae-Sik that could fully utilize and develop his natural talent.

Gun-Ho flew to Japan to pay for the remaining condo price for Mori Aikko's condo. He didn't visit Amiel's office in Nihonbashi this time. Once he fully paid off the condo price, the real estate sales agent handed the condo's key to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho then gave the key and the condo registration document to Mamasan Segawa Joonkko.

"Mori Aikko is coming back in town the day after tomorrow; she is still in a province for her dance performance. Since this is a newly constructed condo, we don't have to do the wall; I guess I will buy some basic household stuff for her."

"I can pay for furniture."

Mama-san laughed.

"We can't ask the sponsor to pay for furniture. You purchased this expensive condo for her after all. Mori Aikko saved up some money by working at the bar; she can get the furniture on her own. She will be able to buy a refrigerator, a washer, and other things with her money that she saved up so far."

Gun-Ho stayed two more nights at New Otani Hotel and went to Chiba Prefecture to see the auto parts exhibition held in Makuhari Messe—a convention center outside of Tokyo. It took him two full days to see them all thoroughly. On the second day in the convention center, when he was collecting some useful pamphlets, he received a text message in English.

"This is Mori Aikko. I just returned to Tokyo. Please come to the condo in Daikanyama, Shibuya at 6 pm today."

Gun-Ho arrived at the condo that he purchased for Mori Aikko. He was carrying a fruit basket. The condo had a keyless entry-lock system and Gun-Ho knew the access code, but he rang the doorbell, instead of entering the condo on his own.

Mori Aikko ran to the door and opened it. She was wearing a pink apron. Gun-Ho could smell the food; it seemed that Mori Aikko was in the middle of cooking for him.

"Oppa*!"

Gun-Ho was wondering where she learned the Korean word, "Oppa." Mori Aikko jumped into Gun-Ho holding his neck and kissed his cheek several times.

"Haha. Let me take off my tie first before us doing this."

Gun-Ho put the fruit basket down on the floor and hugged Mori Aikko.

Gun-Ho then looked around.

Mama-san Segawa Joonkko seemed to have an excellent taste. The furniture in the condo looked sophisticated and very well placed in an organized way even though they were not expensive. The sofa, the dining table, the bed, and other

furniture, they all looked cozy. There was a huge picture hanging on the wall in the living room; it was Mori Aikko wearing a Kimono, and she was smiling broadly in the picture.

"That's the poster from the Gion Matsuri in Kyoto!"

Gun-Ho was enjoying looking at Mori Aikko on the poster when Mori Aikko called for him.

"Yushoku no junbi ga dekimashita (dinner is ready)."

"I think she is saying the dinner is ready. Nice. Idesu (good)."

Gun-Ho went to the dining table while smiling.

On the table, there was warm cooked rice, a piece of fish, Kimchi, dried seaweed, Miso soup, etc. It seemed that Mori Aikko cooked them all by herself. She also didn't forget to prepare sake.

"O meshiagari Kudasai (Please eat.)"

Gun-Ho felt happy. Mori Aikko seemed to feel the same way; she often looked at Gun-Ho and smiled.

After dinner, Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko watched TV in the living room while having some fruit. They talked a lot using the mixed languages of English, Japanese and Korean for a while before they both fell asleep on the sofa. Gun-Ho woke up a moment later and looked at Mori Aikko who was sleeping next to him; she looked happy. When Gun-Ho kissed her cheek, Mori Aikko opened her eyes.

"Come here."

Gun-Ho pulled her close to him and Mori Aikko completely came into Gun-Ho's arms. Gun-Ho could feel her warm body temperature.

"I don't want to go back to Korea. I want to stay here with her forever."

Gun-Ho turned off the light and hugged her tight.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

When Gun-Ho returned to Korea, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who used to be the best engineer in Dyeon already entered the second phase of the product development. He was kneeling in front of the extruding machine; he already took a bath and shaved neatly, and he pulled his hair back in a ponytail. He surely looked resolute and determined.

"What the he*l is he doing?"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo looked certainly strange to Jong-Suk.

"What the fu*k is he doing while kneeling in front of a machine? I just don't understand many Japanese people who act really strange."

However, Jong-Suk didn't laugh at Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's behavior. His eyes looked so serious and determined.

Note*

Oppa - the word is used by a female to a male who is older than her. It is often used between people in a romantic relationship as well.

191 World-Renowned Engineer 3 – PART 2

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo said,

"My true enemy is that extruding machine. When Miyamoto Musashi pulled out his sword, he attained a state of perfect self-effacement. I will pull my sword and attack that extruding machine."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo stood up slowly.

His mouth was shut tight and something flared in his eyes. He had the eyes of a Samurai for a moment.

"I will check the temperature of the extruding machine's cylinder and the rotating screw, along with the temperature during pressing and the expansion. Manager Park, why don't you look inside of the hopper and check the carbon black and the vulcanization accelerator again? And see if the exact amount of the zinc oxide is there according to the recipe and also check the quality of the oil. Attack! I press the switch!"

The extruding machine started moving with a loud noise. The coolant came out in order to make the product cool."

"It's coming out!"

The new sample products started coming out. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo took a piece of the new product that just came out and put it into his mouth. It was a plastic piece and looked like a jelly. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo then said while chewing the piece,

"Wow, this is aromatic."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo kept chewing the piece of the plastic with his eyes closed.

Jong-Suk was staring at Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. He looked nervous.

"He is not going to swallow it, isn't he?"

The way Mr. Sakata Ikuzo handled his work looked very strange to Jong-Suk, but he was in awe of Mr. Sakata Ikuzo at the same time.

"Even though he doesn't swallow the piece, some portion of plastic and oil or carbon will get into his body through his throat."

Jong-Suk now felt scared of Mr. Sakata Ikuzo.

"Japanese people... I certainly admit their high craftsmanship."

Jong-Suk collected the new sample products in order to measure their hardness and tensile strength.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was still chewing the plastic.

"Good. I see my enemy is slowly collapsing while bleeding."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo smiled.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, the plant manager, Jong-Suk and the interpreter headed to Gun-Ho's office with the new sample product.

"President Goo, please take a look at the new product."

Gun-Ho examined the product. The product would be used as part of a car or an electronic device. It was extruded twice, and that made one part of the product hard and another part soft, which was folded. The degree of clearness was excellent. It seemed that they added some perfume to the product; it smelled really good.

"Good job all of you. Before we could celebrate our new product, we will have to pass the S Group's test."

"Of course, sir."

Gun-Ho asked for the sales director—Director Kim.

"Why don't you take the sample product and visit S Group? And meet with the vice president and tell him that we have successfully developed this new

product."

"Yes, sir. You need to keep in mind though that there are tons of researchers at the S Group's research center and most of them have Ph.D. Their testing will be extremely thorough and really hard to pass. I will take our testing result and 20 sample products with me. I will also take Manager Jong-Suk Park as well in case they ask some technical questions."

"Sure. Manager Jong-Suk Park! Go with the sales director to S Group."

"Yes, sir."

Jong-Suk answered in a very respectful way.

Gun-Ho was looking at his smartphone when he received a call from the vice president of S Group.

"President Goo? I received the new sample product. Is this really made by your company?"

"Yes, we developed it."

"Where did you get the raw materials for this product?"

"The raw materials are from Dyeon Japan."

"Did they sell them to you without raising any issues?"

"They just sent us a few bags of the materials since we just need them to do some tests and make sample products."

"It would be nice to use the raw materials provided by Dyeon America from the U.S.; however, it will cost shipping. Anyway, we are in the process of testing the product."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Okay, sir."

"The product looks good, but we will have to analyze to be sure. It will take

about one week to complete our test. We say, 'small head, big ideas.' I guess that is true. I can't believe your company developed that product."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho felt great.

S Group was one of the biggest companies in Korea. The company had been in the position for a long time. People must have an academic degree from the top universities in Korea in order to get a job in that company. The company also required a personality test to all job applicants in addition to the right education and work experience. After the job candidates passed all those tests, they then would be invited for an interview. It was extremely hard to get into that company; however, the salary was really good.

Gun-Ho felt great because his company developed the product which those researchers who had the proven best education, personality and experience couldn't.

It was the end of the day; Gun-Ho was ready to go home when Jae-Sik Moon in a security guard uniform came into his office.

"Hello, sir."

Jae-Sik gave a military salute to Gun-Ho to show his respect toward his employer. Gun-Ho smiled.

"What is it under your arm?"

"It's our high school alumni directory book."

"Really?"

Jae-Sik placed the directory book on Gun-Ho's desk. It was about 250 pages thick.

Gun-Ho smelled the book.

"It smells really good; I can smell the new book."

Gun-Ho opened the cover of the book and looked at the table of contents. The contents were divided into three sections. The first part was about the email addresses, phone numbers and current jobs of the alumni. The second part of the book was about how each of the alumni was doing these days. The part that talked about Gun-Ho drew Gun-Ho's attention. It said,

"Gun-Ho Goo: Acquired GH Mobile located in Asan City, Chungnam Province. Its sales revenue is 70 billion won, and it has 250 employees. He also invested in GH Parts Company in Suzhou City, China, which is currently being run by Min-Hyeok Kim. He also owns a real estate development company called GH Development in Seoul. He contributed to the fund for the entire printing expenses to have this alumni directory book completed."

Jae-Sik originally wrote that Gun-Ho contributed the fund for the entire expenses to make the alumni directory book, but Gun-Ho asked him to limit it to the entire printing expenses.

The third part of the alumni book was about the high school they all went together. It included news of their teachers, some of whom have already passed away.

"Thank you, President Goo."

"Stop saying that!"

"I will send this alumni book to all of our high school friends tomorrow. They won't talk about me like I swindled them anymore. It's because of you, Gun-Ho. I do truly appreciate it."

When the alumni book arrived at each of their high school friends, they were surprised.

"Wow. Gun-Ho Goo is the president of a huge company. It's a big company if they have 250 employees, right?"

"Gun-Ho Goo? That small guy who used to wear shabby sweatshirt all the time? How could this happen? Did he win a lottery or something?"

"You can't acquire that kind of company even though you win the lottery ten times."

"You can never know about someone's life or future."

The members of WestFacing Club, where Won-Chul Jo was actively involved as the president of the club, were astonished as well.

"I heard that Gun-Ho Goo made some good money, but I didn't know he made this much. We can't compete with him anymore."

The members felt half envy and half jealousy.

192 Establishing GH Chemical 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho had 200 billion won in his stock account. No one knew about this money except Gun-Ho himself and God. He initially had 210 billion won after selling his stocks, but he transferred 10 billion won to his bank account so he could use it in acquiring the company and in sponsoring the famous geisha—Mori Aikko. He was thinking about what he was going to do with his 200 billion won.

"Well, let's take some time to figure it out. I'm not going to put my entire money into my business. I've seen too many people who ended up losing all they got by doing it."

Gun-Ho thought of investing in real estate.

"There are so many restrictions in the real estate field. Moreover, I have to pay high taxes once I sell them. It's not easy to liquidate them when I need either. I shouldn't invest in real estate unless I know for certain that such property would bring substantial profit."

He thought then of investing in the stock market.

"In order to generate profits in the stock market, I have to be quick in buying and selling stocks. However, with a substantial amount of money, I can't quickly buy or sell them. There is no guarantee that the stocks I purchase would increase in price. Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town used to say that I shouldn't invest in the stock market because I can't know the other player's cards. I could lose everything that I have by investing in the stock market. I have to be very careful."

Gun-Ho suddenly missed Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town.

"Jong-Suk and I haven't been to the fishing site for quite a while now. Chairman Lee must be fishing there by himself. Maybe I should go fishing this Sunday with Jong-Suk. But Pocheon City where the fishing site is located is too far from

here in Asan City. I didn't really think of the distance to the fishing site when I lived in Seoul. It's hard to go there and it's hard to come back from there too."

Gun-Ho instead decided to give him a call to see how he was doing. He dialed Chairman Lee's office number instead of his personal cell phone.

"Hello? Is it Cheongdam Town? Is the president available?"

"May I tell him who's calling?"

A lady picked up the phone. She seemed to be the secretary who Gun-Ho saw before.

"I am President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Oh, hi, sir. How have you been?"

"Thank you for remembering me."

"How could I not remember you, sir? I really enjoyed the dried persimmons that you brought last time."

"Haha. I am glad you liked it. Is the president in the office?"

"Yes, he is here. Give me one second. I will transfer your call to him."

After a moment, an old man picked up the phone.

"Hello?"

"Sir? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, President Goo. It has been a while."

"How are you? Are you still going to Pocheon City for fishing?"

"Of course. I have my vacation home there."

At that moment, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's face just crossed Gun-Ho's mind. The Japanese engineer's face overlapped Chairman Lee's face who was staring at the water at the fishing site.

"I should have gone to see you more often, sir. I am so sorry about that."

"Don't be. I know you are busy these days. You said you are in Asan City right now, right?"

"That's right, sir."

"How's your business doing?"

"It's doing fine. We just developed a new product. If everything goes well with the product, I think our sales revenue will increase a lot."

"How much is the current sales revenue?"

"It's 70 billion won annually. There are 250 employees."

"That's good. You can grow it bigger and go public."

"Thank you."

"I know you will do just fine since you are Tataki A Gari."

"Tataki A Gari?"

"It means someone successfully moved up the economic ladder from the bottom without any significant academic degree or wealthy family behind or anything like that."

"And I'm also constructing a new factory in Jiksan Town so I could move the current factory there."

"Jiksan Town? Are you talking about the town in Cheonan City?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hmm. I can see you have been really busy."

"Once the factory in Jiksan Town is completed, we will have a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Why don't you come and join us, sir?"

"Sure. Just let me know when you have the exact date. I will stop by Jiksan Town then; I can also go and enjoy the hot spring bath in Onyang."

"Thank you, sir. I will then give you a call later."

Gun-Ho received a call from the vice president of S Group.

"President Goo, congratulations. Your product passed our test that was conducted in our research center. I have one requirement though before we make a contract. You must use the Dyeon's raw materials in manufacturing the product."

"Umm, sir. Dyeon Japan has quite limited raw materials in their location. We will have to get the materials from Dyeon America then."

"Why don't you send us the product cost statement, assuming you are using the raw materials provided by Dyeon America? Also, include the shipping fee."

"Okay. I will send the product cost statement right away."

"You can send the product cost statement to one of our staff here tomorrow via email. Once we approve the cost, you can verify the exact quantity of our initial order in our ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system."

"Thank you, sir."

"I thank you, President Goo, for developing that product."

Gun-Ho called for the sales director.

"I just received a call from the vice president of S Group. Our new product passed its test."

"Oh, really? That's great."

The sales director smiled broadly.

"They are asking us to send them the product cost statement."

"Okay, sir. I will send it to them right away. What about the raw materials?"

"Since we can't get enough raw materials from Dyeon Japan, we will have to get them from Dyeon America."

"But it will cost a lot for shipping."

"Nothing much we can do about it. They insisted on using the raw materials from Dyeon only. My question is whether it is easy to get the raw materials from Dyeon America."

"I heard Lymondell Dyeon had an enormously huge factory in Seattle, U.S.A., and they are selling their raw materials world-wide. So, I don't think we will have any problem getting the materials from them. The problem is the shipping cost."

"The vice president of S Group told me to include the shipping cost in the product cost statement."

"Okay, sir. We will include the CIF (Cost, Insurance, and Freight) price for them then."

"Sounds good."

"And as to the labor cost, we will use the projected labor cost for next year instead of using this years' minimum wages."

"Okay."

"I will bring you the product cost statement once it is ready to be sent, so you can take a look before we send it to S Group."

"Please let the plant manager review it as well."

"I will do that, sir."

An extraordinary event happened to Jae-Sik Moon who was working as a security guard at Gun-Ho's factory. He won a prize for his novel. He had been writing a novel every day during his night shift at the factory. He used a nickname when he submitted his novel; so, no one didn't know that he was the

one who wrote the award-winning fiction.

Jong-Suk ran into the president's office.

"Bro, something huge happened."

193 Establishing GH Chemical 1 – PART 2

"What is it?"

"Jae-Sik bro!"

"What about him? Close the door first before you continue to talk. Everyone will be able to hear you otherwise."

"Jae-Sik bro won a prize with his novel."

"Really? Haha. He did a very good job there. I knew he is good at writing!"

"The award is 50 million won."

"50 million won? Haha. That's a lot. Did he come to work already?"

"No, not yet. He just called me."

"When is he off?"

"He is off on Sundays."

"You are not planning to go to Incheon City to see your parents this Sunday, right?"

"No, I am not. I have to assist that Japanese engineer— Mr. Sakata Ikuzo here. I can't go."

"Then, call Jae-Sik and tell him that I will throw a pork belly party for him this Sunday."

"Wow. I've never expected to hear it from you, bro. I didn't know you can throw a party for someone."

"Did I hurt your feelings?"

"I just felt distant from you since you became the president of a company."

"Stupid! I have never tried to put a distance with you. I have been just too busy."

"Anyway, so you want to buy him pork belly, huh? But usually, the novel prize winner buys his friends pork belly, no?"

"I will buy it. I am the president; I am supposed to buy you guys a good dinner."

Gun-Ho, Jae-Sik, and Jong-Suk met at a pork belly restaurant downtown in Asan City.

"Oh, wow. This restaurant used to be an old house for someone. It looks great and cozy as a restaurant."

"That's right. I do like a restaurant with this kind of vibe."

"Jong-Suk, you didn't bring your car, did you?"

"I intentionally didn't bring my car today, so I can drink as much as I want to without worrying about driving."

"Good."

"It has been a while. When was the last time I had pork belly?"

They poured soju in each other's glass.

"Congratulations, Jae-Sik."

Three men clinked their glasses of soju to each other's and started drinking.

"Since you won the prize for your novel, you proved yourself as an author. So what are you going to do now? Are you moving back to Seoul?"

"What are you talking about? I am not going anywhere. I am staying here and work the same job at your company."

Jong-Suk said while pouring soju in Jae-Sik's glass.

"Bro, with your novel prize-winning, are you getting lots of requests to write

something?"

"Not necessarily. I won the prize, but after the tax, it's not enough to live in Seoul."

"That's true. Even the rent for a OneRoom is really expensive in Seoul."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click for visiting.

"Yeah. I have a rent-free room here, and I can have my meals at the company. My monthly salary is coming into my bank account on time every month. This is so great. Think of moving back to Seoul for a moment. You have to pay at least 100,000 won per month for rent. With the editing work, I can't make much, and it's not even coming in regularly. I can't have a better life there at all."

"That's right, Jae-Sik Bro. If you move back to Seoul, your cute bro—Jong-Suk is not there. Gun-Ho bro is not there either. You will feel really lonely."

"Yeah, I like here and I feel grateful to both of you, Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk for helping me when I need it the most."

"I didn't really do anything for you. You don't have to feel that way."

"I am even grateful for your presence standing next to me, Jong-Suk. If I get into a fight, you will stand on my side at least, right?"

"Nah. I will pretend that I've never seen you in my life."

"You, fu*ker!"

The three men were drinking, talking and laughing together until late night that day. They drank until they all became drunk.

"Bro, the yard with this big tree looks really nice, right? The tree adds a special vibe to the restaurant."

"That's true. What kind of tree is this?"

"We are like those people in Romance of the Three Kingdoms, having a drink in

a place where there is a yard with a big tree. It's like we are doing that Oath of the Peach Garden thing."

"If so, you must be Zhang Fei since you are the youngest among us. You actually do act like Zhang Fei in Romance of the Three Kingdoms."

The three men laughed altogether.

"Okay. If I am Zhang Fei, then Gun-Ho bro is Liu Bei, and Jae-Sik bro is Guan Yu without a beard."

"Then, which role should we give to Min-Hyeok in China?"

"Maybe Zhuge Liang? Or Zhao Yun?"

"Hmm. I don't know..."

"Well, it is hard to place people in the right position. Now I understand why Gun-Ho bro always thinks hard to find the right position for workers."

Those three men walked out of the restaurant while putting arms around each other's shoulders, and they were singing together. They walked around the entire Onyang Town in Asan City.

The second factory where the research center was located was sold for 4 billion won.

Gun-Ho used the sales proceeds to pay for the loan to Korea Credit Guarantee Fund in order to lower the debt ratio of the company. The loan from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund had kept bothering him for quite a while because there was a joint surety involved. Gun-Ho now felt like the debt ratio of GH Mobile decreased substantially.

Gun-Ho asked for the accounting manager.

"When do we expect to have the semi-annual financial statements report?"

"We will have it ready by next week. Since it's a semi-annual report, it will be just several pages of papers, not a booklet."

"You will have to bring several copies of it. I will have to send it to our major bank and to Financial Supervisory Service as well. I think our major customers will ask for it too."

"We usually get 20 of them. If we need more, we can always make copies of it."

"Can you ask the accountant office to make one in English?"

"In English?"

"Yes. I will have to send it to Dyeon Japan as well, and it has to be written in English."

"Did you say Dyeon Japan?"

"Yes. Just ask them to make one in English."

"Yes, sir."

"One more thing. You have the phone number to GH Parts Company in China, right?"

"Yes, I have their number."

"Make a call to them and ask President Min-Hyeok Kim to make their semi-annual financial statements report in English as well. Hmm, never mind. I will call him myself."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Min-Hyeok right away.

"How are you?"

"Good. It's going well so far."

"You are expecting to receive GH Parts Company's semi-annual financial statements report soon, right?"

"Yeah. I actually asked the accountant here to make more copies so I can send it to you."

"When the report is ready, ask the accountant to make another one in English."

"Okay, I will ask him. Why do we need an English version of the financial report? Do we have good news?"

"Well, it's too early to tell. I will let you know once I know for sure."

Once the second factory where the research center was located was sold, the workers started worrying about their current job security.

The chief officer of the research center came to the president's office to see Gun-Ho.

"The workers in the research center heard that the factory was sold, and they lost their motivation to work."

"How many workers are there in the research center?"

"We have 30 workers."

"Why don't you bring them all to the meeting room? I will talk to them."

"Yes, sir."

The workers from the research center started coming into the meeting room. They seemed to be all nervous when they heard the president wanted to talk to them.

194 Establishing GH Chemical 2 – PART 1

In the research center, there was no position such as a manager or a supervisor. Instead, they had a senior researcher or a managing researcher as a position. Most workers in the research center had an excellent academic degree and a lot of them were creative, compared to workers in other fields; however, some of them were not good at socializing. They were mostly in their late 30s or 40s except for a few workers who were the same age as Gun-Ho. The entire research center workers were sitting in the first row in the meeting room.

Gun-Ho stood up in front of them and bowed before he started talking.

"I know all of you must be very busy to perform your work duties, but I had to ask you all to come to the meeting room. As you all know, this company has experienced a severe financial crisis and it was once under court receivership. I don't think any individual should be responsible for the crisis but the entire company is responsible for it. The research center is also responsible for the past financial crisis as it is part of the company."

While Gun-Ho was talking, everyone in the meeting room stayed silent.

"The company spends annually more than 4 billion won for the research center's R&D including the wages. It is 5.7 % of our company's annual sales revenue."

The workers started talking among themselves.

"Is it that much?"

"He said that the expense includes our wages."

"It is still a substantial amount of money."

Gun-Ho picked up a habit of talking with numbers while he had worked in the accounting department.

"The research center hasn't produced any outcome corresponding to the expense the company spends for it—the amount of 4 billion won."

Gun-Ho could hear a dry cough from here and there.

"Since I joined the company, we paid off some urgent debt to our vendors and suppliers, and also we paid for the unpaid wages. However, we still have a significant loan from banks, and our company's debt ratio is still high. So, we had to sell our second factory where the research center is located to reduce our debts."

A cell phone from the seat in the back started ringing and the cell phone owner quickly turned it off.

"The chief officer of the research center who is sitting right in front of me has kept on insisting that the company shouldn't lay off any of the research center workers."

The chief officer of the research center moved a bit from his seat when Gun-Ho talked about him. The workers at the research center at least wouldn't blame him after Gun-Ho's speech.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I promise all of you here as the president of this company. Even though we sell any part of the company, we will not lay anyone off."

They all seemed to feel a sense of relief.

"However, we can't keep the same way we have done so far; it has to change, especially with the research center. We will ask another company to do the research work for us, and you will all be reallocated to another department within the company. I hope you understand my decision."

"Hmm. Hmm."

Gun-Ho could hear dry cough sound again.

Gun-Ho was a smooth speaker. He wouldn't have imagined speaking in front of

people when he had no money; he definitely wasn't a good speaker then at all. However, he changed. He was now a big player from Gangnam. He didn't feel shy or feel a little any longer. This company was not all he had. He had more than 200 billion won in cash. He was in his mid-30s, but he didn't feel little in front of the research center workers or the executives who were older than him. However, he was not arrogant. He was understanding and generous because he once lived a very poor life.

The workers in the meeting room thought that Gun-Ho was a great speaker. The research center workers were good at studying and researching, but many of them were shy in speaking in front of people. However, Gun-Ho was confident in speaking.

The western saying, "Money talks everything" seemed to be true.

Gun-Ho continued to talk,

"For now, please think about which department you want to work in, write it down, and submit your preferred department to the chief officer of the research center. We will take that into account when we determine your next department you will be working in. Thank you for your hard work and cooperation."

The research center workers at the meeting room lowered their heads as Gun-Ho talked.

"If you have any questions, this is your opportunity to ask."

A worker sitting in the middle raised his hand.

"Will our salary change once we are reallocated to another department?"

"You will receive the same salary as you do now."

"Since we move within the company, we don't get severance pay, right?"

"Right. However, if you want to receive your severance pay in advance, we can arrange it as well, even though I do not recommend it."

"Will we be discriminated in promotion?"

The workers in the room all laughed. Gun-Ho laughed intentionally along with them to make them feel easy.

"There will never be discrimination in promotion against anyone. I rather believe that the research center workers should receive preferential treatment."

The chief officer of the research center suddenly stood up from his seat.

"Did you all hear what the president said? We just need to comply with the company policy, okay?"

Gun-Ho stood up as well.

"Thank you all for coming. You can all go now."

Gun-Ho gave a deep bow to the workers, and the workers bowed to Gun-Ho as well in their sitting position.

Gun-Ho was checking his personal bank account online in his office when he was alone. He was then surprised by some extra money deposited in his account.

"Huh? Where did this 30 million won come from?"

It was from Jae-Sik Moon.

"Ha. This dude! He sent me 30 million won I lent him the other day to pay off his debt. It was quick. I guess he used the prize money that he won for his novel."

Gun-Ho made a call to Jae-Sik.

"Hey, you were supposed to pay me 500,000 won every month, but you quickly paid it off all at once."

"Yeah. Since I have the money, I decided to pay off the debt. I might have spent them all if I keep the money with me. So, I wanted to pay the money I borrowed from you first. I really appreciate your help."

"You say that again!"

"I already sent the alumni directory book to all of our high school friends. Some

called me to thank me, and some said they were sorry that they misunderstood me.

"Oh, really? That's nice. You recovered your reputation."

"Not just my reputation. I recovered my credit score as well."

"Oh, that's true. Haha."

"I will let you go, Gun-Ho. You must be very busy talking with a lot of people as a president. Thank you again for your help."

Once he got off the phone with Jae-Sik, Gun-Ho smiled.

"That dude! He can't stand owing to someone. With his personality, he must have a really hard time when he became a person with a bad score and his friends thought he was a swindler. He suffered because he is too naive and honest because he doesn't know how to deceive other people. He is the type of person who just feels happy when he writes."

When he thought about Jae-Sik, it occurred to him that he once committed embezzlement when he worked for YS Tech. Gun-Ho would never be free from that incident and the feeling of guilt would stay with him for the rest of his life. Gun-Ho made a call to President Young-Sik Park.

195 Establishing GH Chemical 2 – PART 2

"Hi, brother. It's me, Gun-Ho Goo." "Oh, oh, my little brother, how have you been? What makes you call me this time?" President Young-Sik Park started speaking a dialect again. He did that when he was caught off guard. "It has been a while since I saw you. How about we have lunch together today? Do you have any prior engagement for lunch today?" "Even though I have a prior engagement, you are always my priority." "There is a good Bibimbap* restaurant close to Yeongin Mountain. I will see you there at 1 pm. I will send you a text on the way there." Before heading to the restaurant for lunch, Gun-Ho took one of the new product samples— AM083 Assembly and put it in his pocket. There were not many people at the restaurant. The restaurant's main customers were the people who did mountain climbing to Yeongin Mountain, so the restaurant became really busy during the weekend. President Young-Sik Park was already at the restaurant waiting for Gun-Ho. "Brother!" Find authorized novels in Webnovel faster updates, better experience Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting. "I just arrived too. Please have a seat over there. It's a seat for an important person." "You should sit there, brother." "Don't say that. You are the president of a big company; you should take that seat."

President Young-Sik Park pushed Gun-Ho to the seat. An overweight woman came to the table where Gun-Ho's party was sitting at. She seemed to be the owner of the restaurant. "We specialize in Bibimbap here. We have boiled pork too if you like. You will have seasoned pollack with your Bibimbap." "Okay. We will have Bibimbap with boiled port meat then." Gun-Ho asked President Young-Sik Park after sipping his water. "How is President Se-Young Oh—the previous president of Mulpasaneop?" "He is doing way better than the time when he was the Mulpasaneop's president because of you. His son is doing good with his new job in a big company. Oh, his son is assigned to a new project in China. He will work at a branch office in China." "Since he is an experienced worker, he will be the branch manager in China branch office?" "Well, even if he had previous work experience, I don't think he could get the branch manager position just yet. I guess he will be maybe an assistant branch manager." "That's nice." "I heard GH Mobile is currently developing a new product. How is it going?"

People said that you invited the world-best engineer in the field for consultation. I am so curious about how it is going." "We already made a sample product and sent to the S Group, and we passed their test. They will soon visit our company to see the factory themselves." "Oh, really? That's great. If you are doing well, I feel so happy as if I am doing good."

"Wow, this boiled pork meat tastes really good. Would you like to have Dongdongju* with the meat?" "I can't drink much. I even blush with one glass of liquor. Do you have high alcohol tolerance? Let's just have one drink then." They both drank only one glass of Dongdongju. "This is so good. Drinking Dongdongju in nature with my favorite brother... I am having one of the best times." "Brother, how is your company doing lately? Your YS Tech?" "YS Tech? Since you helped us last time, it is still going. When Mulpasaneop was about to start the court receivership, I thought our company would go broke with them. It was one of the difficult times in my entire life. You are my savior." "Don't mention it." Gun-Ho took the new sample product out of his pocket and showed it to President Young-Sik Park. "Please take a look at this." "What is this?" "This is the sample product we recently developed with the help of the Japanese engineer." "It came out from one extruding machine? Wow. It's so distinctive. This is highly precise. It has several different parts in one product. Some parts are tender, some are solid and some are transparent. This is magnificent." President Young-Sik Park of YS tech checked the sample product thoroughly. He rubbed it and he smelled it.

"It's not a complete form though. We will insert an aluminum ring for a handle." "A ring?" "According to the Japanese engineer, we can't just attach the ring to the product. It is more complicated than that. Attaching a ring to the product involves some chemical work as well." "Hmmm." "So, since we have a lot of work to do already, I am thinking of giving this job to another company." "Really?" President Young-Sik Park sat close to Gun-Ho. "Are you going to receive a lot of product orders from S Group?" "Yes, they will order a significant amount of the products." "Give that work to our company. We have die casting machines too." "The Japanese engineer said the work will be more complicated and difficult than expected. I actually brought the sample product for you, so you can figure out if your company can handle the work. I will send you the product drawing via email as well." "Thank you, little brother. If everything goes well with this new work, I think I can repay you 200 million won that I borrowed the other day." President Young-Sik Park carefully wrapped the sample product that Gun-Ho handed to him with his handkerchief and

slipped it into his pocket.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Professor Jien Wang from China. It had been a while since Gun-Ho talked to him. "Hey, Gun-Ho. You don't give me a call ever if I don't call you?" "Hey, Jien Wang. It has been a while. How are you?" "How's your company doing? Attorney Young-Jin Kim told me that you acquired a huge company in Asan City, Chungnam Province in Korea. You must be very busy." "It's not that big. You can't think of a big company in China to compare with a company in Korea. We have a different scale." "How much is the sales revenue?" "It's 70 billion Korean Won, so it's about 70 million U.S. Dollars." "Wow. That's substantial. A company with 70 million dollar sales revenue is considered a big company in China too. You can have about 7,000 workers then." "We can't do that in Korea. We have only 250 workers now." "Yeah, because the company is in Korea. If the company is located in China, you would have had to hire more workers. In China, we had way too high unemployment rate. Labor workers are having a hard time. Deputy Mayor Seukang Li and I are worried about our country's current economy." "That should be worried about by the government, shouldn't it?" "I am involved in the government work. I am a member of the employment promotion committee in a municipal government. Hey, why don't you invest some money in China?" "Haha. I don't have any money. And I already have an auto parts factory in Suzhou City, China." "How is the business going with that factory?"

"It's going okay. We are not losing money at least. Since Deputy Mayor Seukang Li introduced a window manufacturing company to us, our sales revenue has increased." "Really? That's nice. It seems that Seukang Li will come back to Shanghai soon." "He is coming back to Shanghai? With what position?" "He will be assigned with the position of a director of the bureau." "So, his position changes from a deputy mayor to a director of some kind of bureau. Is he then being demoted?" "No, it's definitely a promotion. You can't compare a deputy mayor in a small city with a director of the bureau in Shanghai." "What is the exact position he will get?" "I am not so sure, but he said he probably will get a director of the bureau in cultural affairs." "What is that position about?" "That department handles the media like TV, music, fine arts, entertainment, etc." "Oh, I see." "The position is not yet confirmed though. He will have to go through the committee's review and ratification first." "Well, I hope all goes well with him." "Oh, you know what? I published a new book." "What kind of book?"

"It has to be an economic book, right? Since I am an economist. The book title is

"Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century. I am thinking of writing about the US-China trade war for my next book." "Will your book be published in Korea too?" "Not yet. My book is academic, so no one has suggested me to publish it in Korea yet." "Haha, really?" "I will send you a copy of my book to your office, even though it is written in Chinese. Read it. It's an assignment from a professor to a student." "Haha. Okay."

Note* Bibimbap – A Korean rice dish with various ingredients such as vegetables and meat with hot sauce and sesame oil. Dongdongju – Korean liquor made of rice

196 Establishing GH Chemical 3 – PART 1

The semi-annual financial statements report arrived. Accountant Nak-Jong Lee from Anchang Accountant Office brought it to Gun-Ho's company himself.

"Oh, you brought it yourself. You could have just sent one of your staff for it."

"I have to bring it myself. I give a report directly to a company's owner for this kind of report."

"Let's have some tea while we talk about our semi-annual financial statements."

"Sure. The company's sales revenue is gradually increasing. That is very encouraging. When the company was still Mulpasaneop, it had a really hard time keeping up the positive net income. Everything is different now."

"We still need to reduce the cost of products, right?"

"The debt ratio has decreased a lot since the second factory was sold. However, the company is bearing a significant amount of construction cost for the new factory in Jiksan Town. So, reducing the product cost won't make any impact much."

"Once the factory in Jiksan Town is completely constructed, we will move to that location, and we will sell the main factory here then."

"If you sell the main factory here, the company's assets will be reduced and the company's debt will be reduced as well accordingly."

"What if we don't sell the main factory, but we run another company here?"

"Are you saying you will acquire another business? That's up to you, President Goo. You can either invest personally or have GH Mobile invest in a new factory."

"If GH Mobile invests in a new factory and if the new factory doesn't do well,

then it will affect GH Mobile, right?"

"Of course, it will."

"Hmm."

"This company has an advantage though."

"What is it?"

"First, this company is 100% owned by one person—you, President Goo, and there is no other shareholder. Also, there are no expenses used by the owner family."

"Why would an owner family use a company's money?"

"There are a lot of companies like that. A president's wife buys an expensive designer handbag with a business credit card, or they use the company money to pay for their son's study abroad, for example. Those kinds of things commonly happen."

"They shouldn't do that."

"There are a lot of company owner families like that. It is a big problem. Some people born to a wealthy family just don't know what they can do and what they cannot do."

"Thank you for your analysis and advice today."

"I am so glad to see the company is doing well."

Gun-Ho left for Japan carrying the English version of the semi-annual financial statements report, company organizational chart, and other documents with him. When he arrived in Japan, he headed to Amiel's office in Nihonbashi. Gun-Ho was with the interpreter who Kim&Jeong Law Office recommended.

"Amiel, what do you think? Do you see an improvement in our company's financial statements report?"

"I do see it doing better..."

"We do have workers, technologies, and a factory that can start working right away with a large land."

"I know you are driven and highly motivated; however, we need to verify the qualifications of the workers and also we need to secure sales network in Asia markets."

"Well, the largest market in Asia is China. I have a company there in Suzhou City specifically. I've attached that company's semi-annual financial statements report as well to the document I just gave to you. We can develop the China market and sell products there using that company."

Amiel thoroughly looked through the documents that Gun-Ho brought in.

"Oh, I was told that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo succeeded in developing a new product for you. Is it true?"

"Yes. We are already talking with the customer about the product, and the product passed their test. We are waiting for their personnel to visit our company to look around our factory. They will order the products more than 100 tons per year."

"100 tons? That is a lot for a single product order. However, that's not good enough."

"The S Group is one of the biggest companies in Korea. Once they start using our product, more companies will request to buy our products soon. You will see."

"Well, since you are extremely motivated, I will talk with the headquarters. The co-venturer's president's personality weighed heavily with the headquarters, so President Goo, Give me your resume—an English version—with your picture on. I need a copy of your passport as well."

Gun-Ho printed out his resume in Amiel's office. He saved his resume in his email account in case he needed it.

"Where is the headquarters of Lymondell Dyeon located?"

"It's in the area 30 mile north from Seattle. Since they supply lots of products to

Boeing, it is located close to the Boeing company."

"I heard Boeing has an enormous factory."

"Don't get me started. You can't even finish a tour of their factory in one day."

"Wow. Really?"

"I have your papers with me, so you can go back to Korea for now. Once I heard from the headquarters, I will let you know. Or, you could possibly receive the response to your office directly from the headquarters. Starting a joint venture involves legal matters. Talk with Attorney Young-Jin Kim about it since he is the expert in the legal area and also he speaks English very well."

"Okay, I will. Thank you."

"You want to go to that bar in Shinjuku?"

"Not this time. Let's go there when we have good news from headquarters."

"Sure."

"There is a rumor that you put Mori Aikko's hair up—the dancing geisha in Shinjuku. Is it true?"

"No comment there, man. I can't talk about my romantic life."

"Oh, shoot. So that's true. You made it. I am so envious of you. You got the most beautiful woman in Japan. You are indeed a man who can achieve anything. I guess you will grab the joint venture opportunity too."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho came back to Korea. Before he headed to Asan City, he stopped by his TowerPalace condo in Seoul. There were tons of mails in the mailbox waiting for him, such as utility bills.

"Well, I will have to take care of these before I go to Asan City. These mails are all about asking me for money."

When Gun-Ho was taking his mail from his mailbox, an old man came into the

mailbox area. He was a resident of the same building as Gun-Ho, and he was the representative of the residents.

"Are you the young man who is living in #18XX, by any chance?"

"Yes, I am."

"We keep receiving the notice to ask you to attend the Civil Defense Training because you haven't showed up. Please go to the training, so I don't have to keep going up to your condo to remind you of it."

"Oh. I am so sorry."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho saw the notification for the Civil Defense Training along with other letters he received.

Gun-Ho slept in his TowerPalace condo by himself that night.

"Maybe I should sell this condo. The 20 pyung large condo next to the Asan KTX training station would be perfect for me. This condo is too expensive to keep. The tax is high, not good."

Gun-Ho, however, thought that he should have a place to take a rest in Seoul since he comes to Seoul from time to time. Moreover, his resident status was registered with this condo.

"Should I ask Mori Aikko to move in with me in this condo?"

Gun-Ho fell asleep while thinking about living together with Mori Aikko in his TowerPalace condo.

197 Establishing GH Chemical 3 – PART 2

The next day, Gun-Ho went to his GH Development office in Gangnam. Manager Kang was dozing off in his chair, and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong was playing with his smartphone chatting with her friends. They used to work hard when Gun-Ho—the president of the company was in the office with them.

"Hi. How have you all been?"

"Oh, sir."

The two employees were frightened and stood up quickly from their seats when they saw Gun-Ho entering the office. Ji-Young became fussy and brought green tea for Gun-Ho while Manager Kang took out papers he had to get Gun-Ho's review and approval. Gun-Ho laughed.

"Easy, people. You can sometimes doze off in the office if you are so tired. I understand."

The OneRoomTel business was doing well. It seemed that Manager Kang had been doing a good job managing them. Ji-Young gave a report to Gun-Ho on the current financial status of the company and showed him the ledger.

"Hmm. I see the office get-together expense has reduced. Why don't you go out more often and have dinner together even though I am not here?"

"Thank... thank you, sir."

"I saw the design office next door on the way here. Their office lights are off. Did they move to somewhere else?"

"They closed the office temporarily. Their business was suffering before they closed the office. They are several months behind their rent."

"Why don't they vacate the office then? It seems all their furniture and stuff are

still in the office."

"I think they placed the office on the market, but no one has shown any interest yet."

"Manager Kang, what do you think about it? Even though they don't use the office, since they haven't completely vacated the office yet, the landlord will ask them to pay the rent, right?"

"That's right, sir. If they want to move out before the contract expires, they will have to pay the rent. If they don't pay the rent, the owner will deduct the amount from their security deposit."

"That means there would be not much left for them to take when they move out, from their security deposit."

"Right. It only takes a few months to go broke."

"That shouldn't be true, Manager Kang."

Ji-Young seemed to be upset because she was close with the workers in that design office.

"That's how it works, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong. The owner will ask them to pay the rent even though they don't really use the office because otherwise, the owner will have to bear the cost for the office. Moreover, if the owner purchased the office with a loan, then he will have to pay the loan interest without making any money from the office."

"So they haven't found any new tenant yet, huh?"

"Right. Even though they put the office on the market, if they can't find any new tenant who would take over their rent, they will have to pay for it. That's sad."

"When we move into our office, I think there were seven workers in their office."

"There are only three of them left. The office manager quit, and the lady worker who helped us to make our company logo is staying home these days because there is no work for her."

"Did you say they do a design work for a publishing company?"

"They do publishing work and also various design works, too. She is really good at what she does."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho rubbed his chin.

Gun-Ho headed to Asan City. He was away from his company in Asan for about four days. He was away for a business trip to Japan and for visiting his office in Seoul.

He called for a meeting in the morning.

"Any news while I was away?"

"Nothing special, sir. The S Group notified us that they will visit our factory next Tuesday to verify our production capacity."

"We will have to present our factory very well to them. Please be prepared for it. This is really important for our company."

"Yes, sir. We already checked the extruding machines and prepared half a ton of the Dyeon's raw materials."

"The raw materials seem to have arrived early. I thought it would take longer since they are coming from the U.S."

"It doesn't take a long time these days. We just make an order through a phone call, and the customs office quickly does their job."

"Really? Haha. Did you get a product recipe from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo?"

"We have received the mould, but he hasn't handed the recipe to us yet. He said he would give it to us once he gets paid for his incentive."

"Of course, he wants his money."

Once the managers and directors left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho saw a mail at his desk.

It was the book that Jien Wang sent to him—Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century."

"Well, even though I studied in China, this should still be difficult for me to read. I will need a dictionary and time to translate."

Gun-Ho asked for Jae-Sik Moon.

"Me? Did you ask for me?"

"Yes, I did. Why don't you have a seat there? Let's have some tea."

"Someone could see us together, which is not good. They would say that a security guard presumptuously is having tea with the president. People are already talking about me behind my back."

"What do they say?"

"They said the company provides a place to stay to a security guard."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Oh, hmm. You don't have to worry about it."

"How can I not be concerned? They will eventually talk bad about you behind your back."

"Hmm. You think so?"

Gun-Ho felt a headache. What Jae-Sik was concerned about made sense to him. The president was supposed to be fair to all his employees.

"By the way, how much do you think it would cost to publish this kind of book in Korea?"

"Let me see, oh, this is a Chinese book, a book published by Zhejiang University Publisher. Hmm. The author graduated from Yale University. Oh, he used to be a college professor in the U.S."

"He is a friend of mine."

"Your friend?"

"Yeah. We became friends when I was in China. He is the same age as us."

"Really? He must be a good friend."

Jae-Sik scanned through the book.

"Assuming we publish this book, 2,000 of them will cost about 12 million won."

"It does cost a lot. What if we publish 1,000 of them?"

"It doesn't really matter how many you publish. It will make a difference only in the printing cost."

"Then what sort of costs are we talking about?"

"I think I talked to you about this before. The cost before the printing-out will be about 3,000 dollars. It's 3 million won. The translation cost will be another 3 million won. This book is 300 pages. Even though we assume the translation cost is 10,000 won per page, the translation costs about 3 million won. The remaining 6 million won is for design, proofreading, editing, printing, etc."

"Hmm."

"Publishing business is all about money as well. The person with more money would win. The more they publish, the higher chance they will have to get a best-selling book."

Gun-Ho was thinking for a moment, and then he suggested to Jae-Sik,

"Would you like to try to run a publishing company in Seoul? Then you don't have to worry about all those people here who are talking about you behind your back."

"A publishing company? I am not capable of running a business like that. In order to run a publishing company, you have to have some sense in selecting books, and you need to be good at sales. I can handle the publishing work itself though. I know I can do very well in that work."

"Hmm. Really?"

"I read the news yesterday online. The lady president of the famous publishing company—KimBooks—left the company. She is very famous in the field. She is known as the hand of Midas in the publishing industry. If you could find someone like her, that would be great."

"Why would a person like her leave the company then?"

"She seemed to not get along with the owner."

"Hey, can you find out her phone number for me?"

"Are you seriously considering having a publishing company? Running this factory should make you busy enough. A publishing work is very different from running a company. You don't make much money. You can't think it could be very similar to this factory business."

"Find out her phone number. Let's see how things turn out."

Jae-Sik looked at Gun-Ho in a suspicious way before he left Gun-Ho's office.

198 Establishing GH Media 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a letter from Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle, U.S.A.

"Shoot. This is all written in English."

Gun-Ho decided to bring the letter to Attorney Young-Jin Kim who studied in America. He called Attorney Kim to check if he was available to meet.

"Attorney Kim? It's me. I will come to Seoul soon to see you. Will you be available this afternoon?"

"Yes, I will be in the office. What's up?"

"I submitted my application to participate in a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, and I just received a letter from them. I think I'd better discuss it with an attorney."

"Really? So you are going to do a joint venture with them."

"GH Mobile will soon move to a new location, and I will keep the current factory in Asan City. I want to start Dyeon Korea there."

"Okay. Come quick. I am really curious about what the letter says."

Gun-Ho took a KTX train heading to Seoul and went to Kim & Jeong Law Office located in the Gwanghwa Gate area.

"Gun-Ho Goo? You are so quick. Let me see the letter."

Gun-Ho handed the letter which was sent by Dyeon to Attorney Kim, and Attorney Kim thoroughly read the letter.

"Well, they said your company's financial statements report that you sent to them was not quite satisfactory to their qualification requirements."

"Really? I lowered the company's debt ratio a lot, but still, it is not sufficient for them?"

"However, they said, they highly recognize the president's drive, work experience, and character, so they decided to invite you for an interview."

"Haha, really?"

"You can come for an interview in the first week of next month. And they said, before you come, they want you to contact their personnel—Angelina Rein—to arrange the specific date for the interview."

"Angelina Rein? Is it a lady?"

"Yes, it's a female name. They gave you her phone number as well."

"They said that you need to bring some photos of the factory's exterior and interior. Also, if you could bring some product samples that your factory manufactured, that would be great."

"That's it?"

"They are also asking you to bring a business plan written in English."

"Hmm. There are a lot of things I need to prepare for the interview..."

"Why don't you ask a professional to do the business plan?"

"A professional?"

"Yes, there are people who are good at it, especially the ones that mostly worked for international companies. Those people usually have an MBA degree and speak fluent English. They can make a beautiful business plan."

"Hmm. Really? They will have to come to my factory then before they start writing our business plan."

"They should. Even though they are the ones who will write your business plan, GH Mobile needs to provide them with basic information about the company."

"Do they charge a lot for their service?"

"Not really. They have their fixed man-day rate."

"Can you then tell them to visit our factory?"

"Okay, I will ask them. Why don't you make a contract with our law firm for your joint venture matter? You will need some legal review of a contract with Dyeon later, anyway."

"Kim & Jeong is notorious for their high legal fees, right?"

"We won't charge you a lot. When you go to Seattle for your interview with Dyeon, you'd better go with us too."

"Hmmm. That's right. Okay, then let's make a contract."

Gun-Ho thought it was a good idea to get help from a law firm since he was about to work with a global company—Dyeon. He was willing to pay for the legal fees.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Two days after Gun-Ho came back to Asan City, two young men visited Gun-Ho's company. They looked distinctive. They were wearing a blinding white shirt with overalls. Their hairstyle was unique as well. They definitely seemed to be people who were heavily influenced by American culture.

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo? I've heard a lot about you, sir. We are referred by Attorney Young-Jin Kim. I am the planning director of Moor Investment."

"Are you here for a business plan?"

"Yes, we are. The most important thing in writing a business plan is to grasp the gist of it. We will start by having a tour of the factory."

Gun-Ho asked for the plant manager, but he was out of the office for the moment. Gun-Ho instead asked for Jong-Suk.

"These gentlemen came here to help us write a business plan. Please guide them to the factory tour."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho introduced the sales director to those people and told them that the sales director was the best person to ask about the company if they had any questions. The sales director could explain very well about the company's value to them since he was once involved in figuring out the company's value with accountants during the past court receivership. They could also have a tour to the research center as well since the research center hadn't dissolved yet. They also visited the new factory in Jiksan Town and took photos.

"Do you think you can make an excellent business plan for our company?"

"Yes, we can. However, I think we need to exaggerate a bit of the sales plan. We will take care of it."

"We are counting on you, people. Thank you for your work."

"We'd like to visit GH Parts Company that is situated in Suzhou City, China, that you have invested in."

"Oh, you do want to visit the factory in China too? It's a small factory though."

"Yes, actually we need to see that factory too. The important key to the business plan is to establish the sales and business network overseas. GH Parts Company in China will be the base camp of the Dyeon Korea for China's market, right?"

"Yes. Okay."

"We will need two flight tickets to Suzhou City, China and a hotel reservation."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"Mr. General Affairs Manager, these two gentlemen need to see our factory in China too. Please prepare two flight tickets to Suzhou City and a hotel reservation for them."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then made a call to Min-Hyeok in China.

"Min-Hyeok? It's me, Gun-Ho. We will send two gentlemen to your factory. They are from a company called Moore Investment. Please take care of them. They will need a tour of the factory."

"What is it regards to?"

"I am trying to do a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, and we need a business plan for it. So I asked a company to do the job. These two gentlemen are professionals from that company. Please show them around."

"Oh, I see. Sure, I will take care of it."

"If we successfully start a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, we will sell the Dyeon's products that would be produced from the factory here to China's market."

"Don't they want to produce it at a factory in China?"

"It seems that they don't want to have a factory in China."

"Really? Then the base camp for sales will be here, huh?"

"I think so. I will give you a stock option for those sales as well."

"Haha, really? I guess I will have to work really hard! I will have the factory ready for their visit."

Gun-Ho thought that Min-Hyeok would do a very good job in selling Dyeon Korea's products rather than sitting in the office at the factory and manufacturing products.

"Once Dyeon Korea succeeded in selling a lot of products, Min-Hyeok will become rich."

Gun-Ho smiled.

199 Establishing GH Media 1 – PART 2

Jae-Sik hesitated in front of Gun-Ho's office before he entered the office.

"Hey, Jae-Sik, please come in. The guests already left."

Jae-Sik entered the office and sat carefully at the conference table in Gun-Ho's office.

"I talked with the lady president who used to work for KimBooks."

"That's good. So you found her phone number."

"My college friend who was my junior at that time happened to work for KimBooks at their editorial department. He also majored in creative writing like me. He made me promise to him that I wouldn't tell anyone that I got her number from him."

"Really? So what does that lady president say?"

"She said she wanted to have some time off from her work at first. And then, once she found out that the person who wanted to talk with her is the president of a big auto parts company, she seems to be interested suddenly."

"So is she willing to meet with me?"

"She said she would visit the company. It seems that she has already been contacted by so many swindlers who said they would want to start a publishing company with her. So, she wants to make sure that you are really the person who is running a big company."

"Haha, really? So when is she coming here?"

"She said she will be here by 2 pm tomorrow."

"That's good. You should be here by 2 pm tomorrow too, okay?"

"Okay, I will."

"Do you have any information on her? Like how old she is?"

"I don't know much about her, but as far as I know, she graduated from Ewha Woman's University; she should be in her late 40s. She has an extensive sales network in the publishing industry, and she has incisive eyes in selecting good books to publish."

"Haha. I see. Okay, I will see you tomorrow at my office."

Gun-Ho was dozing off in his office after lunch when Jae-Sik came with a lady. She was that lady president who was known to have the hand of Midas in the publishing field; her name was Jeong-Sook Shin. She looked proud and intelligent. She walked into the office with a long white scarf around her neck. Jae-Sik introduced her to Gun-Ho.

"She is the previous president of KimBooks. This is President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile here."

She offered first her hands to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"I'm Jeong-Sook Shin. Very nice to meet you."

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo. Please have a seat."

Jeong-Sook sat on a chair.

"I was surprised twice since I came to this company. At first, I was surprised by the size of the company. I was actually expecting to see a factory with several tens of workers, but there are 250 workers in this company. Second, I was surprised because the president of this big company is so young. When I heard that the president of a manufacturing company is interested in starting a publishing company, I expected to see an old man."

Gun-Ho picked up the book written by Professor Jien Wang—Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century and showed it to Jeong-Sook.

"A friend of mine in China wrote this book. I want to publish this book in Korea."

The lady was wondering.

"Are you saying that you just want to publish this book, rather than starting a publishing company?"

"Of course not. I want to publish books that are best-selling books on Amazon.com, starting from this book here. I heard you have discerning eyes for recognizing good books."

"Since you are running a big company, I suppose you have enough funds to invest. How much do you intend to invest in a publishing company?"

"How much do you think would be enough?"

"It will take a few months to publish a book, and you need to pay for the expenses including labor until then. You can assume that it will take at least 300 million won until a publishing company starts generating enough income to be self-sufficient."

"300 million won. Okay. With how much salary would you be happy to work with me in running a publishing company?"

"I don't remember telling you that I would work with you in running a publishing business. I just came here out of curiosity since I am taking my time off from work, and I heard someone in the manufacturing industry was interested in the publishing industry."

"I don't know anything about publishing business, but you have been in the publishing field for a long time, and you have extensive experience and discernment in selecting books. I will take care of the necessary funds. Would you work with me and start a publishing company?"

"I have a few conditions."

"What are they?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"First, I don't want to be interfered in running the publishing company."

"That I can do. I can't interfere with something I don't know about. Moreover, I don't have time or energy to do so since I have another company that I need to run."

"Hahaha. That's the thing I like about. That's why I have declined many offers to work together in running a publishing company. I knew you wouldn't interfere in the publishing business since you have your manufacturing company to run."

"Is there a second condition?"

"I'd like to have a stock option in addition to a salary. The major reason why I quit KimBooks was that I couldn't reach an agreement with its president on a stock option. I want 10%."

Gun-Ho shook his head.

"I have a company in China, and I give a stock option of 5%. I can't give you more than that. I need to keep balance and fairness within my companies. Moreover, a publishing business requires me to take a high risk of failure, and the business is not a type of business that would generate substantial revenue."

"Okay, then I will take a salary plus 5% stock option."

"Okay, I will give you that. However, I have a few conditions as well."

"I am listening."

"I want you to let Mr. Jae-Sik Moon manage the editorial department."

"Mr. Jae-Sik Moon? Of course, I would love to work with him. He used to work in the publishing industry, and he is an award-winning author of a full-length novel as well. He has extensive work experience in editing as well."

"Secondarily, I know three people in a design company in Seoul. I want you to hire them."

"I can give them an opportunity to have an interview with me. I need to see them first before I can tell you whether I would hire them or not. However, since you recommend them, I will see their qualification favorably."

"I will provide you an office-tel that is located close to the Gangnam station in Seoul."

"Sure. An office-tel would be enough until the company becomes stable."

"Okay then. We will contact you as soon as we complete any administration work on our side. The capital of the company is 300 million won, and the company's name will be GH Media. We will register Gun-Ho Goo and Jeong-Sook Shin as the directors of the company. For any paperwork we need from you in order to register your name as the director of the company, you will be contacted by Manger Seong-Il Kang from GH Development in Seoul."

"Sounds good."

When Jeong-Sook and Jae-Sik walked out of Gun-Ho's office, Jeong-Sook asked,

"What does President Goo's father do?"

"President Goo is a self-made successful man."

"Wow! He is so young though."

"He has another factory being built right now; they will soon move to that location. The new factory is in Jiksan Town; he is building a highly advanced factory in a 5,000 pyung large land there."

"5,000 pyung? Wow, he is an amazing person. I don't understand why he wants to have a small publishing company though."

"Why not? He probably likes it a lot."

Gun-Ho made a call to his office in Seoul—GH Development. Ji-Young Jeong picked up the phone.

"How is the design company next door doing?"

"Nothing has changed yet, sir. The office is still closed temporarily."

"You said that you know well the person who worked for that company, right?"

"Yes, the person I am close to is the team leader of their design team."

"Can you tell her to come to the office? Tell her that I will acquire that design company."

"Sir? Are you going to buy that design company?"

"Yes. I will be there by noon today. Tell her that I want to meet with her at noon if she doesn't have any prior engagement."

"Sure, I will let her know."

200 Establishing GH Media 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho went to his office in Gangnam, Seoul—GH Development. The lights in the office next door were on. It seemed that the workers of the design company came to the office.

Gun-Ho entered the design company next door with Ji-Young. Three people who were sitting on a chair stood up when they saw Gun-Ho coming into the office. Ji-Young indicated the woman who seemed to be the oldest among three people.

"This is the team leader of the design team."

"I am Gun-Ho Goo."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I am Min-Sook Oh. I've heard a lot about you, sir."

Min-Sook seemed to be a shy person.

"Who was the president of this company?"

"Our company is not a registered company. The manager who quit the job registered the business as a sole proprietorship. And we just worked together with her."

"What was the nature of the business?"

"We design for books mostly. We also do design work for various things such as business cards, pamphlets, banners, signs, and etc."

"All three of you work at the design team?"

"No, the lady over there, she handled administration work."

A lady who was wearing glasses nodded her head at Gun-Ho.

"How much was the security deposit for this office-tel?"

"The security deposit was 20 million won with a monthly rent of 1.6 million won. We are three months behind our rent. We were 7 when we started this business and we all contributed to the security deposit, and when the manager quit the job, she took her portion from it."

"So, the business is now registered with your name, Ms. Min-Sook Oh?"

"Yes, that's correct."

"I will buy this business, and I will open a publishing company here. Why don't you all join the new publishing company?"

"A publishing company? We would love to work for you, sir."

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, can you ask Manager Kang to come to this office?"

Manager Kang came to the office from next door.

"Manager Kang, I am planning to establish a publishing company. How much do we have in our GH Development bank account?"

"We currently have 340 million won."

"Manager Kang, please prepare all the paperwork to form a publishing company. Its capital will be 300 million won. The company directors will be Gun-Ho Goo, myself and another person whose name is Jeong-Sook Shin. The sole shareholder who owns 100% of the company is Gun-Ho Goo, and the president will be Jeong-Sook Shin."

Everyone in the office was wondering who Jeong-Sook Shin was.

"Jeong-Sook Shin? Who is Jeong-Sook Shin?"

"She is known to have the hand of Midas in the publishing industry. She is the former president of KimBooks."

"Ohhh, I know of her!"

The three ladies of the design company were astonished all at once.

"So once you open a publishing company at this office-tel, Jeong-Sook Shin will join you as the president?"

"Yes, that's correct."

"Wow."

The three ladies clapped together.

The design team leader— Min-Sook Oh suddenly looked worried.

"There are tons of highly competent designers in the publishing field. Will Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin be willing to work with us?"

"It was one of my conditions required when I negotiate with Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin in forming a publishing company. I asked her to hire all of you. She will still talk to every one of you as an interview; however, she will most likely hire all of you unless something unexpected happens."

"Thank you."

"Was that desk over there used by the manager who left the company?"

"Yes."

"Once Jeong-Sook Shin arrived, let her use that desk then. Also, a chief editor will join you ask well."

"A chief editor?"

"Yes. He is the award-winning author of a full-length novel. He will join us in our publishing company. Oh, you know what? Let the chief editor use that desk; his name is Jae-Sik Moon by the way. We will buy a new desk for Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin. Manager Kang, please get her the most luxurious wood desk."

"Yes, sir."

Manager Kang answered while writing down one more item to be added to his to-do list."

Gun-Ho asked the design team leader— Min-Sook Oh.

"Will the office have enough space to work even with an additional desk?"

"It should be okay. There used to be seven people working here altogether."

Gun-Ho took out a piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to Manager Kang.

"This is the phone number of Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin who will join us as the president of the publishing company. You can contact her on this number for the company registration and other necessary paperwork."

"Yes, sir."

"And once the publishing company is established, pay the security deposit and the outstanding balance for rent. You can hand over the company bank account and all the receipts for the expenses you would spend until then for that company to Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin."

"Yes, sir."

"The people here might not be familiar with starting and running a registered company. You can help them if they have any questions or concerns."

"Haha. Don't worry about it, sir."

Manager Kang said while slipping the piece of paper with Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin's phone number into his pocket.

The three workers of the design company had been sort of saved by Gun-Ho; they almost lost their jobs because of their company's financial situation. In addition, they would have their funds back, which they had contributed to pay for the security deposit of their office. The most surprising thing was that they would be working with the legendary figure in the publishing industry— Jeong-Sook Shin.

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok in China.

"The people from Moore Investment arrived here. They are having a tour of the

factory right now.

"Really? Please take good care of them."

"They are more thorough than I expected, and they asked a lot of questions. Especially, they seemed to be very interested in our customers."

"It seems they know what they are doing."

"Oh, I talked with the president of the window manufacturing company yesterday. He said that Deputy Mayor Seukang Li has been assigned to Shanghai."

"Really? Did he tell you what position he is taking?"

"He will be working as a director of the bureau in cultural affairs."

"Oh, I see. It seems you now don't have any language problem talking with Chinese people."

"I can't compete with you, Gun-Ho who went to college in China."

Gun-Ho slightly smiled when he learned that Seukang Li had been promoted and assigned to Shanghai.

"Jien Wang was right about it."

When Gun-Ho came back to Asan City, he called for Jae-Sik.

"Pack your stuff."

"I do like here..."

"People are supposed to work in a position that they can utilize their talent the most. You don't belong to the security guard position. You can do way better than that."

"I don't have any place to stay in Seoul."

"I will get you a OneRoomTel there. The office you will work at is located in Gangnam. It's a convenient location, close to the Gangnam station. Once you get

there, you will work with three design workers. Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin will soon join you as the president, once the company formation process is completed."

"Thank you for getting me a place to stay in Seoul."

"So, you will be working with four ladies; you will be the only male worker there. I am envious of you."

201 Establishing GH Media 2 – PART 2

"Haha. That's true. I don't have to worry about sales, right?"

"Of course not. You just focus on writing and editing. Your salary will be determined by President Jeong-Sook Shin. I determine her salary, but she will handle the salaries of the other workers in that company. Enjoy working with her."

Manager Kang from GH Development called Gun-Ho to let him know that he had completed any legal and administrative process to form GH Media. Therefore, GH Media officially had been established.

"Good work, Min-Hyeok."

"I completed registering the company with the tax office as well."

"What about President Jeong-Sook Shin's new desk?"

"A new desk and a chair for her arrived already. I also bought a table for a guest."

"That's good. There is one more thing I need you to take care of. Please prepare one vacant room in our OneRoomTel. The chief editor will stay there."

"Which OneRoomTel would be good for him?"

"Since the office is located close to the Gangnam Station, let's place him in the OneRoomTel in Yeoksam Town. They have a vacant room, right?"

"Yes, they do. It's not a busy season for a OneRoomTel business right now, so we do have vacant rooms there."

"Don't take rent from him though, at least until the publishing company becomes financially stable."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then made a phone call to President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"It seems that everything is ready. The company has formally been established and the relevant paperwork is all done. The office is ready and the workers are there already. You just need to go to the office to join them. When do you plan to start?"

"Thank you, President Goo. I will start working on Monday."

"Sounds good. Then on Monday, why don't you come to my real estate development office first? It's near Gangnam Station. I will introduce you to the workers."

"I am a bit nervous about all these since it is a start-up company. I don't want to disappoint you, President Goo. I've selected five books based on the list provided by an agency that introduces foreign books. With the book—Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century which you want to publish, we will have six books we want to publish."

"Haha. I totally trust you in that area."

"Oh, since I have you on the phone, I want to ask you to confirm one thing."

"What is it?"

"It's about my salary."

"Until the publishing company starts generating enough revenue to be self-sufficient, what about I pay you 5 million won per month?"

"5 million won? Okay, sounds good for now. I, instead, want you to renegotiate my salary with me twice per year."

"Okay, I can do that. We will have to take the financial status of the company into account anyway in determining your salary."

"What about the salaries of other workers in the company including the chief editor?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Well, you will have to decide on that. You are the best person who would be able to evaluate each worker's qualifications and contribution to the company. So, it should be your call. I will delegate that authority to you."

"Okay. Thank you, sir. I will then see you on Monday at your office in Gangnam."

After getting off the phone with President Jeong-Sook Shin, Gun-Ho calculated with his electronic calculator.

"If we don't successfully find any best-selling book within a year, we won't be able to sell even 20 books and I will lose my entire investment fund of 300 million won for this publishing company. A publishing business seems to be highly risky. It is easy to get into the field, but it is extremely hard to succeed. Well, I will have to rely on President Jeong-Sook Shin's competence. It's up to her now."

Gun-Ho received a call from Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"I was told that the business plan is almost done. They are currently modifying the estimated demand in the China market."

"Really?"

"They are working on the estimated demand of the eastern coastal area of China."

"Can they make that sort of estimation by visiting China for just a few days?"

"Moore Investment has a highly extensive information network. They already grasped the current market of China's eastern coast area, especially on the auto parts and home appliances field. The area includes Hebei, Shandong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang. They are also getting help from a local institution. They have ties to the research team of the social science academy there."

"Hmm, I see."

"They also grasped the present status of the competitors' products. The U.S. is highly competitive in the chemical field, but they wanted to see if other countries such as Germany, France, and the UK are trying to expand their market to China."

"There seems to be a lot more work than I thought."

"You have to be thorough on this matter. You have to keep in mind that you are trying to start a joint venture with a global manufacturing company— Lymondell Dyeon."

"Do you think they can finish the business plan by the end of this week?"

"That's not possible. After they are done with figuring out the market status, they will start working on the estimation of projected profit. They will also translate everything into English. Let's give them ten more days; they will bring a beautiful business plan for you then. Once they complete the business plan, you will have to decide if you want to use that business plan to submit it to Lymondell Dyeon. They will bring the Korean version of the business plan for you as well."

"I hope I can take a look at it as soon as possible."

On Monday, Gun-Ho headed to his office of GH Development in Gangnam, Seoul. He was having a cup of morning coffee at his desk when President Jeong-Sook Shin came into the office.

"I didn't know you have another office here. GH Development is a real estate development company?"

"Yes, it is."

Ms. Ji-Young Jeong brought a green tea for President Jeong-Sook Shin and placed it on the table.

"Thank you."

President Jeong-Sook Shin looked at Ji-Young's face.

"Is she the person who does design work?"

"Haha. No. She is GH Development's employee. She is handling accounting here."

"Oh, really? I'm sorry."

Gun-Ho introduced Manager Seong-Il Kang to President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"Oh, he is Manager Kang. I spoke with him on the phone several times for paperwork. Hi, I finally meet you in person."

Jeong-Sook extended her hands to Manager Kang for a handshake. Manager Kang seemed to be shy.

"Your office will be our office's next door. So if you need any help, just let us know; we are just a door away. We are all family now— GH Development and GH Media, don't we?"

"Thank you for saying that. I look forward to working with you."

Gun-Ho and Jeong-Sook were having a conversation when Jae-Sik Moon entered the GH Development office.

"Oh, Chief Editor Moon, how are you?"

President Jeong-Sook Shin stood up when she saw Jae-Sik coming into the office.

"I looked around our office next door before coming here. It's very nice and cozy."

"Really? Let me take a look."

Ji-Young came to Gun-Ho and said,

"The design workers are all in the office. They are wondering if they can come to this office now."

"No, that wouldn't be necessary. We will come to that office now."

202 Establishing GH Media 3 – PART 1

When Gun-Ho entered the office next door, the design workers stood up altogether.

"Hi. I came with President Jeong-Sook Shin here. She will join you starting today."

"Hi. I've heard a lot about you. My name is Min-Sook Oh."

"You look familiar. Have we met before?"

"I've done some contracting work for KimBooks before."

"Oh, I see. That's why you look so familiar. Nice to meet you. I'm Jeong-Sook Shin."

Min-Sook introduced the other two workers to her.

"This lady here worked in the design team with me. And the lady here, she handled administrative work for our previous company."

"Oh, is that right? Have you worked with a publishing application before?"

"No, not yet."

"We will start using a publishing application at work. The daily orders from Kyobo Book Center and Yes24 for example or some other companies will be all handled using the software. We will use the publishing application for our shipping request as well."

When Jeong-Sook started talking with her employees about the work at the publishing company, Gun-Ho stood up to leave.

"Alright. I will leave you all here so you could comfortably talk about the work. I have an important meeting I need to attend anyway."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

President Shin quickly handed a piece of paper to Gun-Ho.

"What is this?"

"It's a list of the books we will publish."

"Haha. If you are okay with the book selection, then I am okay with it. I totally leave the decision up to you to use your discretion. Manager Kang, why don't you hand over the company bank account and credit card to President Shin?"

"Yes, sir."

Manager Kang handed the new publishing company's bank book and business credit card to Jeong-Sook. Gun-Ho then walked out of the office. They will talk further about the details of the tasks and things of their publishing company.

The workers came to the front door of the office to see Gun-Ho leaving.

"Today is the first day of the company. Why don't you celebrate by having lunch in a nice restaurant all together today?"

Gun-Ho then headed to Asan City.

Gun-Ho was having a cup of coffee in the morning with several directors and managers when the plant manager brought up the topic about Jae-Sik Moon.

"The security guard who used to work night shift here quit the job. I heard he is someone you know, sir."

"I recently established a publishing company named GH Media. He will be working for that company as a chief editor."

"A chief editor?"

"Yes. He used to work in the publishing field, and his novel has recently been selected for an award. The prize was 50 million won."

"Oh, I see. I didn't know he was a writer. Well, I think I saw him writing

something in his security guard office. I guess he was writing a novel."

The people in the office all laughed together.

"That's good for him. He didn't seem to fit in here anyway. He was inept at the work, and I was thinking of letting you know about it. Well, he found a job that fits in with his talent. I am happy for him."

Gun-Ho was picturing Jae-Sik sitting at a desk writing and working with books that he loved. Gun-Ho felt happy for Jae-Sik.

After having a morning meeting with managers and directors, Gun-Ho checked his email. There was an email from President Jeong-Sook Shin; it said,

"President Goo, I understand that I don't have to give you a daily report; however, I believe I need to let you know the decision on the books which we will be publishing, and the salaries of the workers. Here is the list of books we plan to publish."

President Shin listed six books. The book list showed mostly the books about self-development that could be easily read by readers, except 'Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century' authored by Professor Jien Wang. Three of them were written by Japanese writers, and two of them were authored by famous Korean columnist.

"The book titles of these books are very provocative."

Gun-Ho then looked at the workers' salaries.

"President Shin 3.5 million won, Chief Editor Jae-Sik Moon 2.5 million won, Min-Sook Oh 2.2 million won, Assistant designer and administrative staff 1.9 million won."

"I told her that I would pay her 5 million won, but she lowered it to 3.5 million won for herself. I guess she was concerned about what other workers would think about her receiving a high salary now when the company even haven't started generating revenue. However, I know she will ask me to raise it once a book starts selling. She seems to be a sensitive person about money."

Gun-Ho was reading an economic newspaper when the sales director entered his

office.

"Sir, this is the product cost that we will bring to S Group."

"How much is the product cost per unit?"

"It's 4,800 won."

"The labor cost is 860 won, huh?"

"Yes. The labor cost is divided into three different labors: handling the extruding machine and mixing the chemicals, and cutting work, and lastly quality assurance and wrapping."

"Is this based on the next year's projected labor cost?"

"No. We used this year's labor cost. We need to base this year's labor cost for the products that will be manufactured this year."

"The product unit cost seems to be very high. What costs are included?"

"It includes electricity and rent for the factory."

"A rent for the factory?"

"Yes. Even though we own the factory, I included the rental cost. Also, various supplies expenses and depreciation are reflected in the production cost."

"The manufacturing cost per unit itself already exceeds 3,500 won."

"The cost of wrapping and shipping have reflected that cost."

"How much did you list for sales and management?"

"15% of the product cost."

"Do you think the S Group will raise the issue on it?"

"They will try to lower that cost. However, I will convince them to approve our estimated product cost."

"Okay."

"Please sign on the production cost sheet. We will need your signature on it so we can use it outside the company, sir."

Gun-Ho signed on the production cost.

Gun-Ho asked with a smile,

"How much do you think they will ask in their first order?"

"I am not so sure, but I am expecting that they will ask us to produce about 50,000 units."

"50,000... It's 240 million won then."

The sales director was surprised by that, Gun-Ho calculated the revenue without using a calculator.

'He has an excellent number of sense and high capacity for mental computation. Wow. No wonder he succeeded at his young age.'

"Have we received enough raw materials from Dyeon America already for those first 50,000 product unit?"

"We received 3 tons of raw materials so far. We are unloading it right now using a forklift truck."

"Are you visiting S Group tomorrow with the production cost document?"

"Yes. I will go with the assistant manager who was in charge of that estimation."

"Sounds good."

"Okay, sir. Please let me know if you need anything."

The sales director was walking towards the office door to leave when he turned back and came to Gun-Ho to say,

"Sir, I have something I'd like to ask you."

"What is it?"

"Can we have two workers from the research center assigned to our sales department once the research center is dissolved?"

"I will send you one worker."

"We need two of them, sir. We need at least two more people in order to strengthen our sales capacity."

"Let's talk about it later then."

"Okay, sir. I will leave now."

203 Establishing GH Media 3 – PART

2

Gun-Ho thought that if the company would actually receive the first order of the new product of 50,000 units, the 20,000 dollars incentive to be paid for Mr. Sakata Ikuzo would be worth it. "Oh, I'm wondering how Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is doing now. I think I need some exercise too. I'd better do some walking. I stayed in the office for too long. Let's walk to the production field and see how he is doing."

Gun-Ho went to the research lab where Mr. Sakata Ikuzo had been working at. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was doing some experiments. The interpreter was dozing off while sitting behind him; his head was tilted to one side. When Gun-Ho entered the research lab, the interpreter quickly stood up.

"I thought we were done with developing the new product? What are you doing?"

"I was experimenting with TPU."

"What is TPU?"

"TPU is thermoplastic polyurethane. It's a major raw material of the new product."

"What are you working on? We already have our new product completed."

"Urethane changes color after a year. It's one of the drawbacks it has. I want to find a way to prevent that color change."

"You don't waste your time, sir. I will give you a three-day paid vacation. Why don't you take a rest and have fun?"

The interpreter looked so excited and happier than Mr. Sakata Ikuzo when he heard they were given a paid vacation.

When Gun-Ho asked for Manager Jong-Suk Park, he ran to Gun-Ho.

"Why don't you take Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to Seoul for a tour? Mr. Sakata Ikuzo needs to stay with us until we receive the initial product order from S Group and start manufacturing our new product without any problem. This is a good time for him to look around Seoul just like a tourist. Show him Gyeongbug Palace, Namsan Tower, and etc."

"Sure. I will take him to Seoul tomorrow. I am off tomorrow anyway. It's on Saturday."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Oh, tomorrow is Saturday?"

"Bro, you don't know what day is today?"

The next day, Jong-Suk and Mr. Sakata Ikuzo went to Gyeongbug Palace together. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo seemed to be impressed by the beauty of Gyeongbug Palace, particularly, he showed a strong interest in the palace's architectural style. Jong-Suk and Mr. Sakata Ikuzo were at the Namsan Tower which was the next tour destination after visiting Gyeongbug Palace when he received a phone call from Gun-Ho.

"Jong-Suk, where are you?"

"We are at the Namsan Tower."

"When are you going to have for dinner?"

"We decided to have dinner at around 6 pm at Myeong Town."

"After dinner, come to Hannam Town around 8 pm. I am on my way to Seoul. I will meet you there."

"What are we going to do in Hannam Town?"

"I want to buy you a drink. I know a good place to drink there."

"Do you mean that you want to buy Mr. Sakata Ikuzo a drink? Or buy me a drink?"

"I will buy both of you a drink."

"Alrighty. Where in Hannam Town am I supposed to go?"

"Come to the Soonchunhyang Hospital. I will meet you there."

"Okay. Thank you, bro."

Gun-Ho made a call to the bar hostess in Hannam Town—Ms. Jang for the first time in a long time.

"Oh, President Goo? It has been a while. To what do I owe the pleasure of the call?"

"I will be there at 8 pm today. I will bring two more people. One of them is Japanese. So if you could find a girl who can speak Japanese, that would be great."

"Don't worry about it. I told you that our girls can speak either English or Japanese."

Jong-Suk was complaining while standing in front of the Soonchunhyang Hospital entrance.

"There are tons of bars in Itaewon Town, which is closer to where we were. Where does he want to take us to? He said we can just wait in front of Soonchunhyang Hospital and he will pick us up. Are we going to walk to the bar from here?"

While waiting for Gun-Ho in front of the hospital, Jong-Suk felt sorry to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who was standing next to him. The interpreter already went home, so he couldn't even tell Mr. Sakata Ikuzo that he was sorry.

At that moment, two sturdy men in black suits approached Jong-Suk out of nowhere.

"Are they gangsters?"

Jong-Suk felt nervous and he tried to get his body ready to fight.

"Sir, are you Mr. Jong-Suk Park?"

Jong-Suk was frightened by the fact that they knew his name.

"Huh? How in the world do they know my name?"

The tough guys seemed to know Mr. Sakata Ikuzo as well.

"Is that gentleman Mr. Sakata Ikuzo?"

"Yes, we are. Who are you?"

"We will show you the way. Please come with us."

'The way? to where?'

Jong-Suk was thinking that maybe he'd better run; however, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was with him. Jong-Suk didn't know how to say 'run' in Japanese, and he couldn't leave the Japanese engineer behind; he was an important guest for the company after all.

Jong-Suk and Mr. Sakata Ikuzo followed those strangers who looked dangerous. The two men took Jong-Suk and Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to a house.

"Hmm. The house looks nice. It is residential?"

Once they went through an entrance door, there was another door waiting for them. It was another house with a nicely-carved pine tree. The yard was well landscaped with stones and lanterns.

"Welcome to Pine."

A middle-aged woman in a Korean traditional dress greeted Jong-Suk. It was Ms. Jang. Jong-Suk recoiled.

"Where are we? I have to meet Gun-Ho bro. He is probably looking for us at the hospital."

"President Goo is waiting for you inside."

"President Goo?"

Jong-Suk was wondering if that President Goo is the President Gun-Ho Goo. He followed that lady inside the house. The lady talked to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo as well with a smile.

"Kochira ni irassharudeshou (please come this way)."

The middle-aged woman seemed to know how to speak Japanese.

"Oh, Kirei desu ne (pretty)."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was impressed by the beauty of the interior of the house and the lady herself.

When the traditional Korean door that was made of timber frame and paper was opened, a large room appeared. The room was decorated with an embroidered folding screen. Gun-Ho was sitting at a floor table in the middle.

"Please have a seat!"

"Huh? Bro!"

Ms. Jang brought floor cushions that were embroidered with a crane.

"Please have a seat. Here is Himitsu no yosei (a secret bar)."

"Oh, sodesu ka (is that so)?"

Galbi-jjim* and Sinseollo* came out along with liquor.

Three young ladies in a Korean traditional dress entered the room. Jong-Suk seemed to have a crush on them; he just didn't know how to act around beautiful ladies. He had been in a bar and he had a relatively tough life, but he had never been to a secret bar like this one. Moreover, one of the ladies was fluent in Japanese. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's jaw dropped; he seemed to be extremely satisfied and happy.

Gun-Ho lifted a bottle of liquor and said,

"I wanted to buy you a drink in a nice place. I hope you like here."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo took the glass of liquor that Gun-Ho handed to him in two hands in a very respectful way.

"Please sit comfortably, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. In Korea, the older person is supposed to take a glass of liquor from the younger person with one hand."

One of the ladies who could speak Japanese interpreted for Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. She was speaking fluent Japanese.

Gun-Ho told that lady who could speak Japanese.

"Please take good care of him. He is an important guest to me. He is the world-renowned engineer."

Gun-Ho now knew how to make a request to girls in a bar. He felt comfortable doing it. The time made him be able to do so, and his money made him do it as well.

Note*

Galbi-jjim – Korean style beef short ribs dish.

Sinseollo – It is also called the royal hot pot. All sorts of vegetables and meat in a rich broth.

204 New Product 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo and Jong-Suk Park drank a lot that night.

Gun-Ho asked for Ms. Jang—the hostess of the secret bar, Pine.

"We'd like to listen to Gayageum."

Two young ladies in a traditional Korean dress entered the room with Gayageum. Once they started playing it, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo closed his eyes to fully enjoy the music. The ladies played two more songs before they left the room.

Gun-Ho said while filling in Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's glass.

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, you have been a great help to our company. I truly appreciate it. The new product passed S Group's test, and we have already submitted our estimated product cost to them. We are expecting to receive the first product order from them soon."

"Manager Jong-Suk Park helped me a lot in developing the product."

"Since you are retired, I believe you don't have work that you need to start right away after you finish this job with us, do you? What about you work with us for six more months?"

"Are you offering to extend my contract for the next six months?"

"Yes. Manager Park here has a lot to learn from you. I am hoping that you could teach and guide him."

"Manager Park is a very smart man, and he picks up things very quickly in the industrial field. He seems to be able to make anything he wants. While he is excellent in making things by tightening a screw and welding and so on, he still needs more practice in mixing chemicals and carving moulds."

"That's why I am asking you to stay with us for six more months. We would love to have you here with us for an extended period of time."

"I will give the product recipe to Manager Park one by one starting tomorrow. Please share the recipe between you and Manager Park and do not disclose it to anyone else."

"Don't the engineers in the company have to know the recipe?"

"Not really. Competitor companies will always try to find out the recipe."

"What if we file a patent for your product recipe?"

"I am not sure if it is eligible for patent protection, and I don't think it is necessary to patent it. Moreover, I don't know how to do the paperwork to apply for a patent, and I don't think I can prepare all those necessary documents to explain and support the theory of the product to get it patented. What I have is my skills to make the mould and recipe, with my two hands, and I don't think those are patentable. It's like Kimchi. You use the same ingredients for Kimchi, but every family has different taste of Kimchi in their home."

"I see."

"If you need a patented product, you can talk to my brother. He is a Nobel-prize doctor at Tokyo University."

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, you are an engineer, but I am a businessman. I don't need an excellent patented item. What I need is a patented item that will bring me profit."

"Of course."

"Well, we can talk more about patent later. For now, can you teach Manager Park your skills and knowledge so he could produce our new product—AM083 Assembly—when you are not here."

"Okay, I will do that. Someone has to do it once I am not with the company, anyway."

"I have one more favor to ask you, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. As you know, we need to attach an aluminum ring to the new product. I'm going to ask another company to do the job. The company's name is YS Tech. I will ask them to send several skilled workers to our factory for training. Can you teach them?"

"Okay. I will do that."

"Let me fill in your glass, sir."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo seemed to be drunk; he was talking gibberish. When the Gayageum was being played again, he performed Japanese dance along with fast-tempo Gayageum music.

Jong-Suk drank a lot that evening as well. He took every single glass of liquor that a pretty lady in a traditional Korean dress who was sitting next to him handed to him. Jong-Suk couldn't even stand up by himself. Gun-Ho called a paid designated driver and took Jong-Suk and Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to his TowerPalace condo.

When they arrived at Gun-Ho's condo in Gangnam, Jong-Suk woke up for a second and asked,

"Bro! Where are we?"

"We're at my place."

"Wow. How come is it so big?"

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was still sleeping in another room.

The next morning, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo was frightened when he woke up.

"Where am I?"

"Good morning, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. It's my home."

Gun-Ho responded with a bright smile.

"Oh, this is so big."

Most Japanese people lived in a small home, usually about 20 pyung large. It seemed that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo hadn't seen a home this big before.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I've never been to a large home like this before. The view is magnificent. This must be a very high floor."

Jong-Suk asked while looking out the window.

"Bro, how much is this condo?"

"Hey, stop talking about the home, and let's go out to have a hangover soup. I know a good place; they specialize in a blowfish hangover soup."

"Blowfish? I like Korean sausage hangover soup better."

"We can't just go and eat something we like. We need to think about our guest. He is Japanese; he must like fish."

"Oh, you are right. Let's go to that blowfish hangover soup place."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo seemed to like blowfish hangover soup.

He thanked Gun-Ho several times for allowing him to experience delicious Korean food.

"Thank you, Shacho-san (president). Because of you, I had a great time in a secret bar and spent a night at your house; I had a very good sleep there. And today, I am having tasty Bokuoguku (blowfish soup)."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo seemed to be emotional.

Once they returned to Asan City, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo started teaching Jong-Suk passionately.

"Raise the temperature and wrap the extruder's head with three layers of nets. Let the cooling water flow until it goes about 1 meter before placing the product there..."

Jong-Suk learned enthusiastically. The products on the first day came out distorted. However, from the third day, since Jong-Suk started learning from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo, the products came out really pretty.

"They look good."

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo nodded his head, showing that he was satisfied with the outcome.

On the fifth day, the S Group personnel arrived at Gun-Ho's factory to conduct due diligence. They were young researchers of S Group, about the same age as Gun-Ho or Jong-Suk.

"Please give us the test report of the raw materials."

Jong-Suk handed Dyeon America's test report to them. It indicated hardness, tensile strength, and so on. They took out Dyeon America's product themselves and took a picture, and then they performed a quick test like burning it with a lighter.

Jong-Suk demonstrated the product manufacturing in front of them. Once Jong-Suk turned on the switch to raise the temperature, the machine started spouting the cooling water with a loud noise. Vivid-colored products started coming out. The products moved about 1 meter before they got into the cooling water. Steam rose from the products with a sound.

"Wow. They are so pretty."

The researchers from S Group took pictures of it.

"What raw materials did you use for the mixture that goes into the hopper?"

Gun-Ho who was standing next to Jong-Suk answered the question,

"I'm sorry. We can't disclose it. It's the recipe we used to manufacture this product."

205 New Product 1 – PART 2

"Wouldn't you have any problem manufacturing the same products once the Japanese engineer returns to his country?"

"That's why Manager Park demonstrated the product manufacturing himself. He has the recipe and skills to produce it by himself. You just saw him doing it, right?"

"Does that mean he doesn't need the Japanese engineer's help at all to manufacture the products?"

"Manager Park can produce the products with his eyes closed by himself."

The researchers from S Group took notes as they asked questions and had responses from Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho looked at their hands with which they were writing down something. Their hands that were holding a pen were pale like scholars who never had done labor work before in their entire lives. Gun-Ho then looked at Jong-Suk's hands. Jong-Suk had used those hands in tightening screws, coating a machine with oil, etc. for seven to eight years. They were rough, and Gun-Ho was proud of Jong-Suk's rough hands.

"Jong-Suk, I am so proud of you. I respect your life and experience in it."

The researchers eventually left the factory, and Gun-Ho subsequently received the first order of the new products—50,000 of them from S Group. The product cost that the sales director brought to S Group the other day was approved by them without any problem.

The plant manager had to often step out of his office in Asan City because he had to be at the new factory in Jiksan Town. The new factory was almost completed, and his presence was required for electric work. A power transformer needed to be installed, and the overhead crane had to be completed, but Director Yoon was not very familiar with these kinds of works. His area of expertise was with the construction. On the other hand, the plant manager was an expert in the technology field. Director Yoon needed his advice in completing the factory.

"Manager Jong-Suk Park, take care of the production field while I am away."

"Yes, sir."

"The second production line conveyor belt sometimes moves strangely. Keep an eye on it. The belt number five often causes problems with screws."

"Don't worry about it, sir."

"Please repair the cutting machine."

"Why don't you ask the maintenance team to repair it?"

"They don't know much about it. I want you to repair it, Manager Park."

"It's easy. They just need to weld the parts."

"They know. They are just not good at it. Please do it for me."

"Sh*t. I am fu*king busy here too."

"You are the next plant manager, Manager Park. You will have to take care of everything in the factory anyway once you become a plant manager."

Gun-Ho overheard the conversation between Jong-Suk and the plant manager.

"Jong-Suk, please come to my office."

Jong-Suk entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Hey, you are a manager. Don't use a cursing word like f*ck at work. Are you aware of how many workers you are currently managing?"

"I'm sorry, bro."

"Go to Polytechnics College. Take their night classes."

"A college?"

"Yes. Polytechnics College is located in Sinchang Town. Get an associate degree first from there. I will pay for your education."

"I have tons of work to do even at night."

"Just study there. You can study an Automated Facility there."

"I can't speak English."

"You don't have to speak English. They won't ask you to talk with Americans."

"I don't know."

"If you don't finish your college degree, you will be working as a manager until you reach the age of retirement."

"I always feel so sleepy whenever I try to read a book."

"It should be different now from the time when you were in high school. You will feel easy since they will teach you something that you are working with already."

"I need time to think about it."

"You don't have to think about it. Just go and study and get your degree. Start next semester."

Jong-Suk walked out of Gun-Ho's office while scratching his head.

Gun-Ho received a call from Jae-Sik.

"Hey, how is it going?"

"I am doing very well. Thank you. I like the OneRoomTel in Yeoksam Town where I am staying. It's very close to work. Most of all, I love the work I do now. I think I am getting paid too much though."

Gun-Ho already knew how much Jae-Sik was being paid, but he pretended that he didn't.

"Really? How much do you get paid?"

"It's 2.5 million won."

"I guess President Jeong-Sook Shin highly valued you."

"Well, it's still too much."

"Hey, Min-Hyeok. Do you know how much Jong-Suk is getting paid? He is making over 5 million won."

"I can't compare with him. He is a skilled worker."

"You have skills, too. You have the skills of proofreading and editing."

"Are they considered skills? I am truly grateful that I work for GH Media with a high salary and a room in a OneRoomTel. I feel sorry for you, too."

"Don't be. You just work hard. Don't say that again."

"Our office is relaxing right now. The books that President Shin made had a contract with an agency so we could publish, they are being translated right now. President Shin told us to do some market research until the translation is completed."

"I see. The market research is probably necessary."

"So, I am at the Youngpoong Bookstore now."

"Okay. Keep up the good work."

"I will be extremely busy starting next month once the translation is completed. I hope the books hit the jackpot."

"I think it will."

Gun-Ho received a call from the president of YS Tech.

"I heard you received the initial product order."

"Yes, we did."

"Shoot, then we have to start producing the aluminum rings right away."

"Right. We don't have much time."

"We actually tried once, but the size wasn't right. So we are making them again now."

"Have you tried attaching the ring to the product?"

"We have. The ring we made at our first try didn't really fit. That's why we are producing it again. I just came back from the production field and kicked the workers' shin."

"I will send Mr. Sakata Ikuzo there after lunch today."

"Oh, you can do that? Thank you so much."

"Please have the workers ready by then."

"Of course. We will be waiting for him."

Gun-Ho headed to YS Tech with Mr. Sakata Ikuzo and the interpreter.

He became emotional when he saw the YS Tech building.

"When I came here for the first time to have a job interview, this factory looked so large. I remember it like it was yesterday."

Gun-Ho walked up to the second floor and went to the president's office to introduce Mr. Sakata Ikuzo to President Young-Sik Park.

Mr. Sakata Ikuzo examined the ring carefully that YS Tech manufactured.

"There seems to be a problem with the die casting mould."

"That's right. I agree with you."

"Check the cooling water. Lower the temperature and place the rings in the cooling water earlier."

The workers at YS Tech checked the controller of the coolant temperature.

"Lower the temperature, and you need to let them cool quickly. Let's try again. Oh, the interlock transmitter seems to be not working properly."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

As Mr. Sakata Ikuzo instructed, they fixed the interlock transmitter and lower the cooling water temperature. The aluminum rings then came out beautifully.

206 New Product 2 – PART 1

The Japanese engineer—Mr. Sakata Ikuzo—trained the skilled workers at YS Tech for the next two days in attaching the aluminum ring to the new product. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo initially planned to train them for three days, but two days was enough for the workers to be familiarized with the task; it was a simple task after all.

Subsequently, YS Tech sent 50,000 pieces of aluminum rings that were ready to be attached, to GH Mobile. Gun-Ho then went to see President Young-Sik Park of YS Tech.

"President Park, according to your estimated product cost of the rings, the cost per unit is 640 won. We will have to adjust the price. I am personally close to you like a brother, but business is business, right?"

"Haha. Don't be too harsh on it. We need to make our livings too."

"I reviewed the product cost that you sent to us. The labor cost and manufacturing expenses were estimated way too high."

"To be honest with you, yes, that's true. I exaggerated a bit those expenses because I want to repay the money I borrowed from you. Can we just leave it like that?"

"I am not the only one who reviews the product cost. Our sales department will be reviewing it as well, and they will find out."

"I understand that. I just want to repay you the money I borrowed as soon as possible. Whew."

"How were you going to repay it?"

"If we sell you those 50,000 pieces of rings, we get 32 million won per month. I was going to send you 10 million won out of that 32 million won. Is there any way you could just approve our estimated product cost?"

"Let's do this then. I will need some sort of justification for my approval, which I

can tell to the sales department. Let's make it 600 won instead of 640 won. That way, I can tell my sales department to take the price as it is since I already negotiated with you. With 600 won per unit, you can still make 30 million won on a monthly basis. That way, you can still send me 10 million every month."

"Well, it's going to be tight for us, but okay, let's do it. I really want to repay you as soon as I can."

"It will take only 20 months. You will be off the debt then."

"Thank you, President Goo. You are indeed my savior."

President Young-Sik Park held Gun-Ho's hand with his thick hand. Gun-Ho would soon collect the money that he lent to President Park. Nothing was free in Gun-Ho's world. If Gun-Ho helped a person to survive, then he would collect what he spent in saving that person.

GH Mobile's new product—AM803 Assembly—had been sent to the big company—S Group—with a ring that was manufactured by YS Tech, attached to it. S Group highly evaluated the quality of Gun-Ho's factory product. The consumer reviews on the S Group's products that used AM803 Assembly were really good. Accordingly, S Group increased its order from 50,000 to 100,000 units on a monthly basis.

"The unit price is 4800 won, so it's going to be 480 million won for 100,000 pieces. Our annual sales revenue will increase by 5,760 million won."

Jong-Suk came to Gun-Ho's office to talk.

"Bro, we need one more extruding machine from Germany."

"Are we experiencing a shortage of capacity in the factory?"

"Even with overtime work at night, we can't produce enough products to satisfy S Group's order."

"Okay. We will have to order the machine as soon as possible then. It will take time for them to ship the machine. I will request it to our International Business Development team."

"It's going to cost a lot, right?"

"Don't worry about the cost. I will place an order for two extruding machines."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Two of them? It's going to cost you really a lot."

Jong-Suk was leaving the office with his head tilted when Gun-Ho called him.

"Hey, Manager Park!"

Jong-Suk turned around.

"How is the Polytechnics College?"

"It's going okay. I have time to go to college for a night class since I just do the chemical mixing at work. The other workers in the production field do the rest of the task."

"Keep it up. Once you get your associate degree from there, you will have to transfer to a 4-year college."

"Do I really have to do that?"

"You will be managing more and more workers soon. You have to finish your studies when you are still young. Look at the plant manager. He graduated from Inha University, College of Engineering."

"Well, I actually learn new things in college."

"You sh*tty man. I knew you would be good in college."

Gun-Ho tapped Jong-Suk's back.

Once Jong-Suk left the office, Gun-Ho called for the team leader of the International Business Development Team. The team didn't actually involve themselves with work, such as developing a market overseas or doing import or export goods. Many consumers of GH Mobile were big companies that had a factory abroad, and GH Mobile's International Business Development Team

undertook the task of sending GH Mobile's products directly to those factories. It was a small team with simple work. They didn't even have a worker who could speak English fluently in that team.

"Sir, did you ask for me?"

"We are currently using extruding machines made in Germany, right?"

"That... that's correct."

"We need two more extruding machines. Place an order for the exact same machine from Germany."

"Can I have the address of the German company where we should place an order from?"

"The plant manager probably has the German company's pamphlet. You will find their address there."

"Yes, sir."

"We have a customs agent that we have been working with, right?"

"Yes, there is one."

"They do the customs compliance service as well as receiving our products on behalf of us. Is it correct?"

"Yes, sir. They do."

"Make a call to H Capital and tell them that we are getting two extruding machines from Germany and ask them if they can make those machines as a lease."

"Huh? A lease?"

"That way, H Capital owns the extruding machines, and our company leases the machines from them. We don't have to pay for the machines in a lump sum, right? We already have too much debt that we haven't paid yet."

"Yes, sir."

"After using the machines by lease for a while and once the machines' value depreciates, we can acquire them by paying the remaining balance of their price."

"Huh?"

The International Business Development Team's leader seemed to have a hard time understanding the monetary side of the business.

"We will deal with the acquisition of the machines later. Talk with Capital H and find out if they can work it out, leasing the machines to us, for now."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho didn't want to make an unnecessary expenditure even though he had enough money.

When Gun-Ho checked his cell phone, there was a missed call from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

"Why did she call me?"

Gun-Ho called President Shin.

"It's Gun-Ho Goo. I think I missed your call."

"Yes, I called you earlier to talk about Professor Jien Wang's book—Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century."

"The translation hasn't started yet for the book?"

"We have to make a contract for publishing the book, and I was not sure if we need to make it with Zhejiang University Publisher or the individual Professor Jien Wang."

"Hmm. I don't know about those things. Which one is better?"

"If we make a contract with the publisher, they will charge their fees. However, if we do it with Professor Jien Wang personally, there will be no fee, and it's better for him."

"Well, let's do that then."

207 New Product 2 – PART 2

"Okay, then we will directly contact Professor Wang. I have a translator with me here right now, who is very good at translating Chinese into Korean. I will ask him to translate this book."

"Is that translator good at the Chinese language?"

"Not only the Chinese language. He speaks Korean fluently too."

"Korean language?"

"The translator studied in China. He is also a writer. His novel was once selected for an award as well. He is currently teaching the Chinese language in a college. For the translation work from Chinese into Korean, a translator needs to know not just the Chinese language but also the Korean language."

"Hmm. I see. All other books started being translated already? Since you made a contract with an agency for those books."

"That's right. The process of publishing a book is quicker if we do it through an agency. They proceed with all the necessary steps on behalf of us. However, as to the Professor Jien Wang's book, we have to take care of everything; we will even have to go to a bank to send the money to be paid in advance to Professor Jien Wang to China."

"I see."

"The Japanese books that we are publishing with the help of an agency are light read books with small pages, which are easy to read. The translation for those books won't take long."

"What about Professor Wang's book? Will it take long to translate?"

"That book is more like a scholarly book. The translation will take about two months."

"I see. Well, I am not familiar with the publishing business, so I am heavily

counting on you, President Shin."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho was sitting on his chair in his office, and he was thinking quietly with his eyes closed.

'I formed a publishing company—GH Media—sort of on impulse because I had adequate workers for that business: Jae-Sik and the workers from the design company. I am not sure if the company will generate enough revenue though. I invested 300 million won in that company, and I wonder if that money will vanish in a short period of time. Seukang Li is now the director of the bureau of cultural affairs in Shanghai, China, and he has the power in the field, including publishing books and media. I wonder if there will be an opportunity for me to do something using my connection with him.'

Gun-Ho couldn't think of anything for now, that would bring him some profit using his connection with Seukang Li.

"Well, there is nothing much I can do other than to rely on President Jeong-Sook Shin, who is known to have the hand of Midas in the publishing industry."

Gun-Ho then chuckled.

"The hand of Midas? The real hand of Midas should be my hand, I suppose."

Gun-Ho then thought of the joint venture opportunity with Dyeon.

'I am moving my current factory in Asan City to Jiksan Town and establish Dyeon Korea at the current location by investing in kind. Once I form a new company—Dyeon Korea—I will have to invest funds in it again. Would 3 million dollars be enough? Dyeon America probably invested in kind with old equipment and valued it at a high price.'

Gun-Ho continued to think while having a cup of coffee.

'I will tell them that we shouldn't name the company Dyeon Korea. The company will target the entire Asian market. If other companies which buy our products name their company as Dyeon China, Dyeon Indonesia, or Dyeon Taiwan, that would be overwhelming. I will name the company GH Chemical

instead. Its products are a sort of synthetic resins; I guess I can add the word 'Chemical' to the company name. The problem is whether those Americans would approve the name—GH Chemical?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho started having a headache. He wanted to get some fresh air and get some rest. He headed to Dujeong Town in Cheonan City and went into a massage shop behind the Lotte Mart.

"This is so good. I feel so relaxed."

After having a massage and while he was walking out of the massage shop, Gun-Ho gave a call to Director Yoon who had been working at the new factory construction site in Jiksan Town.

"Why don't we have lunch together today?"

The two men went to a Galbi* restaurant called Gyeongbuk Palace. Money was good. Gun-Ho had nice food all the time, and he could get a massage whenever he felt like it. He was living large.

Gun-Ho received a call from Suk-Ho Lee from Geyongridan Street. It was the first time in a long time.

"You have been busy, right? I am just calling you to hear your voice."

"How's your honeymoon life? Aren't you having a baby yet?"

"Speaking of which, I decided to expand my business."

"Expanding to where?"

"I saw a nice place in Itaewon Town."

"Oh, really? You will do fine since you are good at business."

"But I am a bit short on funds to expand my bar. Are you willing to invest about 200 million won in my business?"

"Haha. I don't invest in anything; especially between friends. If things go well, that would be great, but if things don't go well, I might lose a friend. I don't risk that."

"Umm... If you say so..."

"Also, I don't handle funds myself. My company's accounting department handles all financial related matters."

"What about you personally invest in my business?"

"I don't have personal money. I put everything I had into the company when I bought the company. I am on a payroll just like any other employees."

"Really? I thought you would invest some in my bar business."

"I'm sorry that I couldn't. I know it wasn't easy for you to ask me for it. Why don't we have a drink or something?"

"Actually, Won-Chul Jo called me and suggested having a gathering sometime soon."

"Sure. Let's get together. It has been a while since I saw you guys."

Once Gun-Ho got off the phone with Suk-Ho, he talked to himself decisively.

"I have more than 200 billion won in my stock account. However, I will never be involved in a personal monetary dealing with anybody. I am sorry but I can't spend my money on anyone even though someone is dying. When I worked at a factory, no one lent me even 100,000 won. Whenever I asked someone to borrow money, they would ask me how come I couldn't even borrow 100,000 won from somewhere else. I will never spend my money on anyone, never ever."

Gun-Ho then yelled loudly while looking up at the sky,

"I won't spend even a penny to anyone! Never! Ever!"

Several days passed when Gun-Ho received another call from Suk-Ho Lee from Gyeongridan Street again.

"Gun-Ho? I talked with Won-Chul. We will meet at Gangnam Station next Saturday. You are coming, right?"

"Gangnam Station?"

"Yeah. I actually wanted to meet in Itaewon Town, but some of them complained that it wasn't a convenient place for them to come. I think they are all the same: Itaewon Town and Gangnam Station. Don't you think?"

"Oh, that's good. Jae-Sik is working in a publishing company close to Gangnam Station. I will ask him to find a good place for us all to meet around the area."

"Jae-Sik is working for a publishing company?"

"Yeah. It's a start-up company. He is working as a chief editor there."

"Really? Well, I received the high school alumni directory book, so does everyone else. I guess he is not a swindler after all."

"No, he is not at all. He is a very earnest man. You guys just don't know."

Gun-Ho thought that his high school friends didn't have someone to bully anymore, and they might feel bored by now.

Note*

Galbi — Korean grilled beef ribs.

208 New Product 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received a call from Professor Jien Wang.

"President Goo? Are you publishing my book in Korea?"

"Yes, I am working on it."

"I received a call from a young man who speaks fluent Chinese. He said once I approve publishing my book, he will work on translating my book into the Korean language."

"That's good."

"I was told that there is a president who is running the publishing company, but the actual owner is you— President Goo. Is it true?"

"Think about it, Professor Wang. What was the name of that publishing company?"

"GH Media? Oh, that's right! It's your company. GH is your name initials."

"So, did you approve publishing your book in Korea?"

"Of course I did. As soon as I heard that they will give me 7% royalty plus 3,000 dollars in advance, I approve it right away. I need money. Moreover, I am honored to have my book published in Korea. Thank you."

"Don't mention it. I thank you, Professor Wang, for allowing us to publish your book."

"I have one concern though."

"What is it?"

"The book is more like a scholarly book; it was not written for fun reading. I'm not sure if it will sell."

"Of course it will because the book was written by the famous Professor Jien Wang."

"Hey, cut it out, man."

"How is Seukang Li doing?"

"He has been extremely busy since he moved to Shanghai. He will be like that until he gets familiar with the new job."

"Of course."

"Oh, since Seukang Li's bureau oversees publishing books and media stuff, I can ask him to introduce a good Chinese publishing company to you. What do you think?"

"For what?"

"If your company has a good book that was published in Korea, you can publish it in China too."

"We handle foreign books mostly, so it won't be necessary. However, if we happen to have a book written by a Korean author, I will ask them."

"It would be nice if we can do a joint venture with you for a publishing company, but China doesn't open its door in that field."

"Really?"

"Well, books can greatly influence the thoughts of people in China. I guess that's why they don't want to open the door to the world in that particular field."

"My publishing company is a start-up company. I don't really get involved in the operation. I invited a lady president and she is running the company."

"I think women would probably do a better job in the publishing industry since they are more delicate and sensitive than men."

"I was told that many book readers are women as well."

"By the way, I've already sent the publishing contract to GH Media. I will send

the original contract by EMS."

"I hope your book will hit a jackpot, so we both can make money, and you can become famous."

"Haha. Let's have our fingers crossed."

Moore Investment brought two versions of the business plan: English version and Korean version.

"Thank you very much."

Gun-Ho picked up the Korean version of the business plan.

"It's pretty thick."

"It's 50 pages thick."

"What about the English version?"

Gun-Ho looked at the English version; it said 'Joint Venture Company's Business Plan.'

"It's about the same."

Gun-Ho opened the Korean version.

"Business Outline, Products, Estimated Demands, Sales and Production Plan, Investment Plan..."

"Please take a close look at the plan for the raw materials' supply and demand, and estimated financial statements."

"Okay, I will. Let me take some time to go through this, and I will give you a call."

"We've consulted with the plant manager and the chief officer of the research center before completing the plot plan for the factory."

"Oh, is that right?"

"As indicated in the conclusion at the end, if you target China and other Asian markets, the company will grow larger than GH Mobile."

"You mean the new joint venture company?"

"Yes."

"Let's add one more thing to the conclusion."

"Sure."

The two staff from Moore Investment pulled out a pen and paper to write down what Gun-Ho would say. The watches that they were wearing and half-covered by their white shirts looked like high-end expensive watches.

"If we will target the Asian market including China, we will have to change the joint venture's name to something else. I suggest GH Chemical rather than Dyeon Korea."

"Yes, sir. I will make the modification right away."

"Do you have extra copies of the business plan?"

"Of course. We always prepare extra copies in case our client needs more."

"When you return to Seoul, could you send one copy to Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Kim & Jeong Law Office? One English version and one Korean version, please."

"Sure, we will."

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok. He said he would visit Korea soon.

"My grandmother passed away. I need to come to Korea to see my family for a few days."

"Really? I am so sorry to hear that, Min-Hyeok. Once you arrive in Korea, come to see me in Asan City. Why don't you make your return to China on Sunday? We will have a high school reunion in the Gangnam Station area on Saturday."

"Meeting our high school classmates? I don't want to see them."

"Why not?"

"They are a bunch of condescending jerks. When I worked for a small company and when I studied for the government job exam, they looked down on me. Especially, Won-Chul Jo and Suk-Ho Lee, they treated me like I was invisible."

"Just come, and you buy the second round at the union. They are our friends who will come to your future wedding."

"Oh, that reminds me of my mom. My mom will start nagging again. She wants to set up a meeting with girls so I can marry soon."

"That's nice, right? You and I, we will have to get married soon before we get older."

"Well, actually, I have someone. But don't tell anyone, okay?"

"Really? That's great. Who is it? Is it someone I know?"

"She is an English teacher in Shanghai International School. It just happened like that."

"Oh, nice. Congratulations. I am envious of you!"

"Thank you."

"Did you meet her when you were in college?"

"No, she is Chinese."

"Chinese?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"She is actually a Korean Chinese. She studied in the U.S. though."

"Really? You can settle down in China once you marry the Chinese lady. That's good."

"I don't know. I am not sure if it is okay..."

"No, it's good. We are living in a globalized world. International marriage is good."

Gun-Ho wanted to tell Min-Hyeok that he was also dating someone who was Japanese.

After getting off the phone with Min-Hyeok, Gun-Ho felt uneasy.

"I think Min-Hyeok will get married soon. Am I the only one who will be left as a single at my age?"

Gun-Ho missed Mori Aikko. He felt like Mori Aikko would run towards him anytime soon with a bright smile.

"I am wondering what Mori Aikko is doing now. Is she on a trip for her dance performance in other provinces? Or is she working at the bar in Shinjuku City?"

Gun-Ho sent a text message to Mori Aikko. Texting in English was actually the best way to communicate with her since they didn't speak the same language.

"Mori Aikko, I love you. I am missing you right now."

Mori Aikko replied to Gun-Ho's text message right away.

"I love you, Shacho-san. I miss you too. I am in Nara, Kinki right now. There is an event I participate in Yoshiki-en. I will be back in Tokyo next week."

209 New Product 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho asked Jae-Sik to make a reservation for a good restaurant around the Gangnam Station area.

"How many seats do I need to reserve?"

"Around fifteen people will be coming. I guess the same number of people showed up when we had a gathering at Gyeongridan Street last time."

"Who are coming?"

"Those friends who talked bad behind you, that you were a swindler."

"Our classmates from high school?"

"Yeah."

"I don't want to see those people."

"You sound just like Min-Hyeok."

"Is Min-Hyeok coming too?"

"Yeah. He is visiting Korea soon because his grandmother passed away. He will come to our gathering as well."

"If Min-Hyeok is coming, I will join the gathering too."

"Okay. Pick a quiet place."

"I know a good place in the area. I will make a reservation."

Gun-Ho's cell phone started ringing; it was a call from Won-Chul Jo who was working as a manager in a big company.

"Shoot. I feel like I am being surrounded by all the friends from high school these days."

Gun-Ho murmured before picking up the phone.

"Gun-Ho Goo? It's me, Won-Chul. Did Suk-Ho call you about our high school reunion?"

"Yeah, I spoke with him already."

"We are going to meet at Gangnam Station. Do you happen to know any good restaurant around the area?"

"Actually, I already asked Jae-Sik Moon to find one and make a reservation for our gathering."

"Jae-Sik Moon? Where is he?"

"He is working for a publishing company these days. He is a chief editor."

"Really? Isn't he the swindler who tried to deceive some of our friends from high school?"

"What makes you think he is a swindler? He didn't deceive anybody. He sent our high school's alumni directory book to everyone as he promised."

"That's true, but there is a rumor like that."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I don't hear any rumor like that at all. He is working as a chief editor, and he won an award for his novel lately."

"Really?"

"Jae-Sik Moon will join us at our gathering this time and Min-Hyeok is coming too, from China."

"Min-Hyeok Kim is coming too? I guess we will have a big high school reunion this time. Min-Ho Kang said he will be coming as well."

"Min-Ho Kang?"

"Don't you remember him? He used to actively participate in a civic organization and did a lot of protests."

"What is he doing now?"

"He just came back from the big house. He is unemployed right now."

"The big house?"

"Yeah, he has just been released from the prison in Yeosu City. He violated some regulation in protesting, so he was sent to prison."

"Really? I think I heard he was involved in some civic group. I see."

Min-Hyeok arrived in Korea and he came to GH Mobile factory in Asan City.

"Wow. The factory is huge. It's several times bigger than the factory in China."

Jong-Suk ran to the area where Min-Hyeok was having a tour in the factory, to see him."

"Bro, good to see you."

Min-Hyeok and Jong-Suk hugged each other.

"Jong-Suk, you seem to lose some weight. You look slimmer than the last time you came to China."

"Don't get me started, bro. I have been working with a hectic schedule. I worked to develop a new product during the day, and took a night class after work at Polytechnics College."

"You are going to college now? Good job, Jong-Suk. You made the right choice. I am thinking of getting an MBA degree once things go easy at work. We need to develop ourselves to grow with President Gun-Ho Goo, don't you think?"

"Gun-Ho bro actually forced me into the Polytechnics College."

"It's good for you."

Gun-Ho introduced Min-Hyeok to the major directors and managers of GH

Mobile.

"This is President Min-Hyeok Kim. He is running our factory in China."

The plant manager extended his hand to Min-Hyeok with a bright smile.

"Nice to meet you."

"I am retiring soon, and President Goo suggested me to work at the factory in China for a year after I retire and give some technical advice and educate the workers there. I guess I will join you at the factory in China soon. I look forward to working with you, President Kim."

"I heard of it too. We are expecting you there, sir. We actually need you there as soon as possible. The factory is producing way too many defective products right now, and we are getting a lot of claims from our customers. It is a war zone with defective products. We are welcoming you."

Min-Hyeok also met with the sales director, the chief officer of the research center, Director Yoon from the new factory in Jiksan Town, and the general affairs manager.

"This is my business card."

Min-Hyeok gave his business card to everyone whom he was introduced to. His business card had the same company logo as GH Mobile in Asan City.

As Gun-Ho instructed, Jong-Suk took Min-Hyeok to the new product's production line.

"Bro, this is the new product that we recently developed. Do you see the man over there, who is carving something while sitting on a chair? He is a Japanese engineer— Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who successfully developed the product for us."

"Hmm, it looks great. The product looks like it was extruded twice, and the material is something related to urethane."

"Your time in the factory seems to be well paid off, bro. You sound like an expert now."

"Hey, Manager Park, give me one of the new products like a sample. I want to take it with me to China."

"Why? You want to try to make it?"

"There is no way our factory in China would be able to make a product like this one. I just want to show it to our customers in China to show off that our parent company in Korea manufactures a product like this."

"Why don't you take 100 of them then?"

"Sure. Please pack those products in a bag before I leave."

Gun-Ho, Min-Hyeok and Jong-Suk headed to Asan Bay. They wanted to have sashimi with soju while looking at the ocean. It was actually Min-Hyeok's idea to go there.

"You know what? When I was in China, I desperately craved for sashimi."

"Why didn't you eat it then? Isn't there sashimi in China?"

"There is, but I wasn't sure if it is safe to eat raw fish in China. Since Chinese people usually cook everything and they don't really eat raw food."

"I see."

"So I planned to eat a lot of sashimi once I arrived in Korea."

"Eat a lot, bro. You can have mine too."

They arrived at a beachfront restaurant.

"Jong-Suk, order the food as much as you want. I will pay for it. My monthly salary is 20,000 Yuan."

"20,000 Yuan? How much is it in Korean Won? Is it 3.6 million won? Bro, I'm sorry to tell you that I beat you on the salary. I am being paid more than 5 million won. I used to get paid 3 million won when I worked at a factory in Yangju City, but when I joined Gun-Ho bro's company, I got a huge raise. Thanks to Gun-Ho bro."

"Still, I will pay for it today. I am getting a stock option too."

"Stock option? You have to produce a good outcome to receive it. If you don't reach a certain level of sales revenue, getting a stock option becomes meaningless, right?"

"You will see. I am sure I will earn a lot this year."

"Keep up the good job, bro, and buy me a drink too once you successfully get that stock option thing."

Jong-Suk ordered all sorts of sashimi: flatfish, flounder, sea cucumber, sea squirt, and so on. They drank soju with sashimi in the moonlight while looking out at the ocean. They talked about their old days when they were younger and when they were still living in Incheon City, until late at night. They laughed together and had a good time. They came back home after 11 pm that night.

210 Business Plan 1 – PART 1

Attorney Young-Jin Kim called Gun-Ho after reviewing the business plan about the joint venture with Dyeon America. "I reviewed it, but I am not sure if I am the right person to review and give any comments on it. I don't know much about factory business." "I sent you the business plan because you will accompany me to the U.S. when I go on a business trip for an interview with Dyeon America." "The business plan looks professionally done though, even if we can't guarantee that the company will achieve the goal as stated in the business plan." "When do you think we can go to the U.S.?" "GH Mobile is contracted with the Kim & Jeong law firm for the joint venture matter with Dyeon America. We will soon have to schedule for the trip. It will be a business trip; we need to keep in mind that we are not going there for fun." "Why don't you schedule a date with Angelina who is in charge of scheduling the interview?" "My week is already quite full. What about next week?" "Next week works for me." Gun-Ho looked at the calendar with his smartphone. "I guess I can go to Japan after attending the high school reunion since the business trip to the U.S. will be scheduled for next week."

Gun-Ho looked at a picture of Mori Aikko that was saved in his smartphone. "You always look cute!" Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experience Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting. Gun-Ho kissed her on his smartphone. Gun-Ho made a reservation for the flight to Japan. He didn't ask the general affairs department to arrange for this trip, but he personally handled the preparation for the trip, including purchasing a flight ticket to Japan. "We just sent you your flight reservation to Japan via email. Please bring the print-out of the electronic reservation when you check-in at the airport and make sure you receive the boarding pass after check-in." The travel agency agent kindly gave the check-in and boarding instructions to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho worked only in the morning that day and headed to Gimpo International Airport. He purchased a gift for Mori Aikko at the duty-free shop at the airport. "Come to think of it, I've never bought Mori Aikko any present before, even though I purchased a condo for her." Gun-Ho shopped at the duty-free shop and got cosmetics and perfume for Mori Aikko and western liquor for himself. Once he arrived at Haneda Airport in Tokyo, he took a taxi and went straight to the condo in Daikanyama, Shibuya. While he was in the taxi, Gun-Ho sent a text

message to Mori Aikko."I just arrived at Haneda Airport and on my way to Shibuya.

Mori Aikko replied,"The passcode for the condo has been changed to your phone number. :)"Gun-Ho smiled. Gun-Ho arrived at the condo and he entered his phone number to the keyless entry lock system. It worked. Gun-Ho rang the doorbell rather than just entering the condo because he didn't want to frighten her.Mori Aikko who was cooking for Gun-Ho ran to the door. She looked cuter than the last time Gun-Ho saw her."Oppa!""Aikko!"The two young couple hugged and kissed each other for a while without saying a word. Gun-Ho could hear Mori Aikko's breathing and he clasped her small waist."Oppa, did you miss me?"Mori Aikko surprisingly spoke in Korean even though she stuttered a bit."Of course, I missed you."""How much did you miss me?""Like the size of the sky."""You are lying."""I'm dead serious."

Gun-Ho fiercely kissed Mori-Aikko again. Gun-Ho could feel Mori Aikko's tongue on his lips."Oppa, I am cooking Sukiyaki for dinner."""When did you learn Korean?""I am taking a Korean language class. I'm studying it while watching Korean videos as well."""That's nice. I am so proud of you, my Mori Aikko."Gun-Ho hugged Mori Aikko again."I have to go back to the kitchen to check Sukiyaki."Sukiyaki is a Japanese dish of meat and vegetables which is simmered at the table."Where did you learn how to cook it?""I learned it from my grandmother."""Doesn't your grandmother visit you here?""She came to visit me from Sapporo once, but she went back home. She wants to meet you, Shacho-san."""Why didn't she stay with you here longer?""She said she didn't feel comfortable here."""I see. Oh, you know what? I got you something. I hope you like it."Gun-Ho gave Mori Aikko the cosmetics and perfume he purchased at the duty-free shop at the airport."Wow. Saikodawa (You are the best)!"

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko sat at the dining table face-to-face and enjoyed Sukiyaki together. They looked like a married couple who were having dinner at home after work.At that moment, Gun-Ho thought of Min-Hyeok Kim."He said he wanted to marry the Korean Chinese girl. He would probably feel the same way I do right now when he is having dinner with a girl like this."Gun-Ho, let out a sigh unwittingly."What's wrong, Oppa? Are you feeling tired?""No, I'm okay."""Why don't you go to the room and lay down in bed? I prepared comfortable clothes for you. I will wash your feet for you."Gun-Ho felt asleep while Mori Aikko was washing his feet. When he woke up a while later, he found Mori Aikko sleeping in his arms.Mori Aikko lost her parents when she

was a little girl. It seemed like she considered Gun-Ho as her parents and her lover at the same time. It seemed she wanted to depend on Gun-Ho just like a child depended on her parents. The word, 'sponsor' had partially included that sort of meaning. Gun-Ho once again had a dream-like night in Tokyo and came back to Korea the following day. Attorney Young-Jin Kim called Gun-Ho after talking with Angelina Rein and scheduling the interview date with her.

"Our interview date is scheduled for next Thursday at 2 pm. It will be held in their second meeting room. We will be meeting with Ms. Angelina Rein and the vice president of the International Business Development Department of Dyeon." "That's good. Maybe we'd better arrive at Seattle a day before the interview day?" "Sounds good. We can take a flight that will arrive in the morning. If we leave at night on Tuesday we will arrive the next day in the morning. It will take more than 10 hours to get to Seattle even we take a non-stop Korean Air." "It's really far." The team leader of Gun-Ho's company's International Business Development Team entered Gun-Ho's office. "Sir, I talked with H capital. They said they can make a lease of the equipment to us. They even sent us a price chart for reference. The chart is made based on equipment that is worth 100 million won." "That's nice." "The manager of H Capital wanted to pay a visit to our factory. They will need your approval in addition to the company's certificate of a registered seal, certificate of formation, registered stamp, and etc." "You can check with the general affairs department for all the relevant documents." "Yes, sir." "Did you also talk with the customs agent for importing machines?" "Yes, they said we can. However, we might not need to import them."

"Why is that?" "I found an authorized dealer that is selling the same machines in Korea. I already checked with them. They confirmed that they currently have several of them in their warehouse. They said we could visit their warehouse to verify. Would you like to pay a visit to their store?" "Will you call for Manager Park from the production department for me?" Manager Jong-Suk Park entered Gun-Ho's office. Jong-Suk was careful in selecting words when he talked to Gun-Ho since the International Business Development Team's leader was with them in the office. "Did you call for me, sir?" "An authorized dealer for machines in Korea claimed that they have several extruding machines from Germany, which we want to purchase. Will you visit their store and verify it?" "Yes, sir." "When you go there, take the team leader of the International Business Development with you. And check all the necessary information about the machines; such as their price, manufacture year, A/S, etc." "Yes, sir." "Also, once

you bring the machines, do not install them here, but install them to our new factory in Jiksan Town. We will have to move to that location soon anyway." "Yes, sir." Manager Jong-Suk Park and the International Business Development Team leader answered at the same time.

211 Business Plan 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho's high school reunion was held in a Korean food restaurant called Baek-Hwa that was situated in the Gangnam Station area. There were about 21 people attending the high school reunion. All those friends were busy talking to each other and the restaurant became noisy. The president of the high school reunion —Won-Chul Jo stood up.

"It seems we have everyone here. Let's say 'Bravo' to all of us who made this far in our lives since we are all here together. Bravo!"

"Bravo!"

They then drank a glass of liquor.

"Let me introduce our friends who came far from here. At first, this is Min-Hyeok Kim who is running an auto parts company in Jiangsu Province, China."

"Hello, everyone. I'm Min-Hyeok Kim."

Min-Hyeok stood up from his seat and gave a deep bow to the crowd.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok! Give me your business card before you leave today. I am in China too, in Qingdao City!"

Min-Hyeok actually came prepared and brought a bundle of his business cards. He walked around the crowd and gave his business card to everyone there.

"The president of GH Parts Company? You are the president?"

"Yeah."

"GH is Gun-Ho's company, no?"

"That's right."

Gun-Ho stood up at that moment.

"Min-Hyeok is actually running the company independently. He is receiving a stock option. It's more like a business partnership."

"So you two work together as a business partner?"

"You can say that."

Won-Chul continued to talk,

"And, we have one of our friends who came to our gathering for the first time. He is the one who made our beautiful high school directory book and sent it to all of us earlier. Jae-Sik Moon! He is now working as a chief editor in a publishing company."

Jae-Sik stood up and gave a bow.

"Umm, I am not a swindler."

Everyone in the room laughed out loud when they heard Jae-Sik's rather blunt statement without introduction.

"Our friend, Jae-Sik Moon won an award for his novel recently. The prize was 50 million won."

"Wow. Is Jae-Sik buying us a drink today?"

"Our dinner will be paid with our membership fee. And after dinner, we go to a bar and will have a drink. Min-Hyeok Kim will treat us for the drink. It seems like Min-Hyeok is making good money in China."

"Really? Yeah, it looks that way."

They all clapped for Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Are we having something more after a drink? And Jae-Sik Moon will treat us there?"

Jae-Sik didn't respond to that question; he was just sitting on his chair and smiled.

Won-Chul Jo continued to talk.

"For the last but not the least, we have a friend here today with us, who couldn't have attended our meeting so far because of his activities with a civic group. Min-Ho Kang!"

Min-Ho Kang stood up and the crowd clapped for him.

Someone in the middle of the crowd shouted.

"Hey, Min-Ho! Did you go to the big house?"

People laughed.

"Yeah, I had fun there."

"You should only eat Tofu today then."

Won-Chul was going to say something, and then he decided not to. There were 21 people there and it was really noisy. Won-Chul had a hard time making them listen to him.

People gathered close to Gun-Ho.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo. Let me fill in your glass with liquor."

"I will have just a little. I am not a good drinker."

Gun-Ho let everyone fill in his glass with liquor but he drank a little bit of them. People didn't push Gun-Ho to drink more though. Gun-Ho who was the wealthiest among the friends gradually became their idol.

Min-Ho Kang, who was just released from prison for his activities with a civic group filled Gun-Ho's glass with liquor.

"I will have just a bit."

Unlike other friends, Min-Ho kept pouring liquor even after Gun-Ho's glass overflowed with it.

"Stop it."

"Why? You don't want to take the glass of liquor that I filled in for you?"

"Haha. What are you talking about? I just don't have a high alcohol tolerance. I can't drink much."

"I hate people like you. You are one of those people who accumulate their wealth by exploiting manual laborers."

"I've never done it. As you already know, I wasn't born into a wealthy family. I was born poor."

"Not anymore. What were you doing when the labor workers at your factory worked so hard with all those machines and machine oils? You probably were drinking with girls."

"Hey, what are you doing there? Someone stop Min-Ho. He seems to be drunk already."

"What were you doing when I was fighting for the poor's right on the street? Gun-Ho Goo? Min-Hyeok Kim? You two are just businessmen who make money no matter how, without caring about the society and people."

Min-Ho's statement seemed to upset Min-Hyeok.

"Hey, what's wrong with you? Are you drunk?"

"Yeah, I'm drunk. So what? I can't face this fu*cking society without drinking. I can't stay sober."

"Just keep drinking then and stop your BS."

Min-Ho Kang turned his attention to Jae-Sik Moon this time.

"Jae-Sik Moon! You are writing a novel, huh? Don't write a funny story or useless stuff, but write about the problems of this society!"

"I actually write pure literature."

Once Min-Ho started talking gibberish, a few friends left the gathering earlier; most of them had a home far from the area.

"I will be leaving."

"I gotta go too."

After five to six friends left the restaurant, Gun-Ho tried to calm Min-Ho Kang with a smile.

"Maybe you are right. I think you need to become a politician, not a businessman for sure. Our society needs people like you."

"You think so, right? Gun-Ho Goo, I'm so glad that you understand me."

"Yeah, your body seems to refuse to take more alcohol. Stop drinking for today. You are probably exhausted after having time in the big house."

"So, you became a businessman, huh? When you were in high school, you were so poor. That's why you decided to become a businessman who is extorting money and labor from the poor? Stop doing it. Our people can find happiness once those wealthy business people like Samsung and Hyundai disappears."

One of the friends finally yelled at Min-Ho.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Hey, you dumb knucklehead! We do need Samsung and Hyundai to compete with other countries. You stupid moron!"

"What did you just call me? A moron?"

The room was heated by those people with different opinions. Some friends dragged Min-Ho out of the restaurant. Gun-Ho followed them outside.

"Min-Ho, let's have a talk."

Gun-Ho took Min-Ho to a quiet place in an alley.

"To be honest with you, I was very surprised when I heard what happened to you. I'm sorry I didn't visit you in the prison. I heard that people become weakened once they spend some time in prison. Get something good for your body with this."

Gun-Ho quickly slipped an envelope into Min-Ho's pocket.

"What the fu*k is this?"

Min-Ho took out the envelope from his pocket. However, when he opened it and realized there were a lot of cash in it, he slowly put it back to his pocket.

"You are drunk and must be tired today. Why don't you go home now? I will let our other friends that you went home earlier. I know you are the one who truly worries about our society."

Gun-Ho quickly grabbed a taxi and sent Min-Ho to his home.

Gun-Ho could calm Min-Ho Kang down and convince him to leave the meeting early, with his money. It was not for his skillful talk or physical force, but it was his money that gave Gun-Ho the power to do it. Gun-Ho became a powerful man.

212 Business Plan 2 – PART 1

The next morning after Gun-Ho had the high school reunion, Gun-Ho called Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Did you have a good time last night?"

"Don't get me started. After everyone left for home except seven of us, we had a second and third round last night."

"Oh, you did? I had to leave early yesterday. I took Min-Ho outside the restaurant since he was too drunk and started talking gibberish. After sending him home by taxi, I came home as well. I couldn't stay longer to join another round; I was so drunk myself too."

"What's wrong with Min-Ho? I think I will have to have a serious talk with him."

"Don't do anything stupid! He was just too drunk to talk straight. He must have probably regretted by now what he did last night once he sobered up."

"Other friends also agreed with me that we have to do something about Min-Ho."

"Who were those seven people whom you stayed with till late last night?"

"They were Suk-Ho Lee, Won-Chul Jo, Byeong-Chul Hwang, and Jae-Sik Moon. I paid for the second round, and Jae-Sik paid for the third round."

"That's good."

"I am going back to China tomorrow. I will have to get back to my work."

"Oh, I was going to ask you. We received 1.5 billion won when we terminated the joint venture with Kunshan City. How much funds do we have left now?"

"We spent 500 million won out of that fund to handle the equipment situation of the factory. Some of the machines had stopped working because they were not in use for too long. We also used some of the funds to pay for the unpaid wages of

the workers and for the outstanding balance of the factory rent."

"So how much do we have left now?"

"After we resume the business of the factory, we made some profits, and those are saved in your bank account. So, we have about 1.3 billion won now."

"1.3 billion won... Let's then buy a storage with that money."

"A storage? Our factory is large enough to store more stuff. We don't need an additional storage."

"The storage is not for the use of GH Parts Company. It will be used for the business of the future joint venture with Dyeon."

"Oh, I see. We will need a space to pile up Dyeon Korea's products that will be sold in the China market."

"That's right."

"How large do you think we will need for the storage?"

"I am thinking of a space in the range between 300 pyung and 1,000 pyung. Since the space is for storage purpose, not to be used as a factory, we won't need a high electricity capacity."

"I will look for one and will let you know how it goes."

"When you look for a storage, you also have to make sure if we can buy the land with our name."

"If we buy land, we will get the ownership of the land."

"As you may know already, China has a different system. There are some lands that we can acquire with our own name, and also there are some lands where a landowner would lease the land to us and would say we would be able to still register as our own land, which is a total lie."

"Hmmm. I will keep that in mind and take a good look at it."

"You want to look at the location as well. It needs to be convenient to come and

go. Also, we want a land that has the potential to increase in price in the future."

"So we want a land that will be used for storage but also that could be a good investment property."

"Yeah. That way, we can borrow money from a bank using the land as collateral in the future if necessary."

It was early fall. People started wearing long sleeves.

Gun-Ho was meeting with Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Incheon International Airport to go to Seattle together.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Hey, you are wearing long sleeves, so am I. It's chilly these days."

"You brought a huge bag. What is that for? Are you planning to bring a pretty blond girl in that bag?"

"It's almost empty. I am just taking some clothes and a few books; that's all."

"I brought some books too. I guess I need them for my over 10-hour flight."

"What book are you carrying? What's the title?"

"Oh, this? I just brought this hoping it would help me with my long hour trip."

"What's the book title? Business Model Design Compass? Is it an American book?"

"Haha. Let me read it first, and I will tell you everything about the book."

"I brought only some magazines."

"Magazines are good."

"I've reserved Korean Air business class for us."

"We could have taken the economic class. That's good enough."

"It's going to be a long flight. We need some space to stretch our legs out."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim arrived at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

Seattle was a city located in the Pacific Northwest. The Boeing company was situated in Seattle. Also, other large companies such as Starbucks and Amazon.com had headquarters in Seattle. Amazon was founded in this city. Lymondell Dyeon which Gun-Ho was heading to was located there as well.

"We can rent a car at the airport, but let's take the subway instead. It will take us to downtown."

"I'm good either way."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim arrived at their hotel—Sheraton—when the sun started going down.

"President Goo, we will have a long day tomorrow. Let's take a good rest today. We can go to the town for a tour tomorrow."

"Sure. I think I need to stay at the hotel today, anyway. I think something went wrong with the food that I had during the flight."

"Do you want me to get you some medicine?"

"Nah. I brought all kinds of medicines in preparation for all sorts of cases I could think of; I came prepared for diarrhea, cold, skin cuts, etc. I always carry these around when I go on a trip."

"Wow. You are indeed well prepared. I guess I have to learn from you."

"Are we renting a car tomorrow? We will have to go to Dyeon America."

"The hotel will prepare that for us. I wanted to have a field trip to the Boeing company since we are in Seattle; however, I am not sure if we have time for that."

"We can do it later. I was told that it would take more than a day to have a tour of their factory. They have an enormously large factory."

"Yeah, probably we should do it later. We will have to have at least dinner today, right?"

"Of course. Let's meet at the lobby after unpacking in our rooms."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim had dinner in a restaurant that was attached to the hotel. Attorney Young-Jin Kim ordered a wine for himself; however, Gun-Ho couldn't drink that night because of his diarrhea symptom.

"The food is not bad here, right?"

"Yeah, it's good. The hotel doesn't look super luxurious, but I like its downtown location. I can easily go out and walk around downtown."

"Since you are not feeling well, why don't you go up to your room and take a rest?"

"Nah, it's okay. I think I want to take a walk downtown after having dinner by myself. It will help me digest food."

"That sounds good too. You probably want to walk around after a long hour flight."

213 Business Plan 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho walked around the town in Seattle.

The city looked certainly exotic to Gun-Ho. All the business signs were written in English, and even the lights on the street looked different from the ones in Korea as well.

"This is a beautiful city"

Gun-Ho enjoyed walking on the street while window shopping in the roadside stores.

"Chicken Valley? That reminds me of the Korean combination menu of a deep-fried chicken with beer. I miss it. Oh, shoot. I shouldn't think of food; that makes me sick to my stomach again."

Gun-Ho continued to walk while hearing American people talking on the street.

"Well, I have no idea what those people are talking about."

At that moment, an old American lady approached Gun-Ho and said something to him. She was probably asking for directions to somewhere.

"I don't speak English."

Gun-Ho quickly walked away after telling her that he couldn't speak English.

After a long walk, Gun-Ho felt much better in his stomach.

"Good exercise is indeed the best medicine. I feel like I already digested all of the food I had for dinner earlier at the hotel."

When Gun-Ho came back to his room at the hotel, he took a traditional Korean medicine before heading to bed.

Angelina Rein was an overweight woman in her 40s.

"Hahaha. I guess you expected to see a beautiful blond woman when you heard of my name. Well, welcome to America. You have come a long way. Please have a seat."

Ms. Rein seemed to be an optimist. When she talked with other workers, she always had a smile on her face. Gun-Ho could also observe other workers showing their respect to her when they addressed her; she was probably in a high-ranked position in the company.

"Mr. Goo and Mr. Kim, I'm so glad to finally meet you. Mr. Brandon Burke who is in charge of international business development will be here to meet with you this afternoon. In the meantime, I was instructed by him to give you a tour of our factory."

"Thank you."

"Mr. Richard Amiel from Dyeon Japan called me the other day and asked me to take good care of you two."

"Thank you."

"We respect the request from Mr. Brandon Burke and Ms. Richard Amiel."

Angelina Rein then made a call to ask for someone.

Before that someone, who Ms. Rein requested for, arrived, Ms. Rein asked a few questions to Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim.

"What is the population of South Korea?"

"We have about 51.47 million."

"What about GDP per capita in South Korea?"

"It's about 30,000 dollars."

Angelina Rein continued her small talk with the guests; it seemed that she didn't want her guests to feel bored. Her eyes over her glasses looked bright. While she was having a conversation with Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim, she didn't lose her smile even for a second.

A young man in uniform entered the room. He had a dark skin.

"These two gentlemen are businessmen from South Korea. We might do a joint venture with them. Why don't you show them around our factory? Give them a tour of the production line five and six and make sure that we don't allow them to take pictures."

"Yes, Chief!"

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim followed the man to have a tour of the factory.

The production field was on the first floor, and they could watch it from the second-floor aisle. They were not allowed to be in the production field.

"Wow, it's huge!"

Attorney Young-Jin Kim seemed to be surprised by the size of the factory.

"I've never seen a factory like this. This is so great. I feel like I am in the Noryangjin Fisheries Wholesale Market."

"Haha. I thought of the exact same thing. When I studied for the government job exam in Noryangjin, I went to that market from time to time. I used to look down at the market from the bridge near the subway station."

"The products came out and was placed on the conveyor belt, and they automatically fell into a basket."

"Hmm, everything is done by an automatic system."

"Wow. It really is a factory of a world-renowned company."

"I want a factory like this."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim turned around to look at Gun-Ho; he was smiling.

"Pray for success."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim tapped Gun-Ho's shoulder as he said it.

In the afternoon, Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim met with Mr. Brandon Burke for the interview, who was the vice president and in charge of the international business development department.

The table in the small meeting room that Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim were invited in was decorated with the national flag of South Korea and the star-spangled banner.

"Nice to meet you. I am the vice president of Lymondell Dyeon. My name is Brandon Burke."

Brandon Burke was a tall man; he was probably in his late 50s. He was bold but a good-looking man.

"Hi. I am the president of GH Mobile in Korea."

"I am Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim & Jeong Law Firm in Korea."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim handed their business cards to Mr. Burke.

There were three people who were attending the interview from Lymondell Dyeon: the vice president—Mr. Burke—Angelina Rein, and an African American lady who was wearing glasses; she seemed to be there to record the interview.

The interview started.

Mr. Burke had Gun-Ho's business plan in front of him with Gun-Ho's business card next to it.

"We have reviewed GH Mobile's financial statements. They didn't quite satisfy our requirements though. The debt ratio is too high. Do you have a plan to reduce the debt ratio?"

Angelina Rein who was sitting next to Mr. Burke added to Mr. Burke's question.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"We are talking about a plan such as capital increase, for example."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim talked to Gun-Ho in a low voice.

"They are asking if you plan to increase the capital of the company."

Gun-Ho firmly responded.

"We have no plans to increase our capital. However, our sales revenue has recently increased by 15% due to our successful new product development, and it is continuously growing. We are going to lower our debt ratio by increasing our sales revenue occurred from our new product sales."

Gun-Ho took out GH Mobile's new product—AM083 Assembly—from his bag; it was the product that was developed by Mr. Sakata Ikuzo.

"This is our new product. It was extruded twice."

Mr. Burke and Ms. Rein looked carefully at the product that Gun-Ho handed to them.

"Was it really manufactured by GH Mobile in Korea?"

"Yes, we produced it in our factory."

Mr. Burke examined the product thoroughly; he touched it, folded it, and smelled it.

"Which company's raw materials did you use to manufacture this product?"

"We used Dyeon America's materials."

Mr. Burke smiled slightly.

"Good. Next question. GH Mobile's credit rating is B-. This is one of the reasons why we are reluctant to do a joint venture with GH Mobile. We don't require an A+ credit rating, but we want at least an A-. I'd like to hear what you think about this."

"We consolidated the company's debt. We now have a loan from one bank. We just paid off the loan from Korea Credit Guarantee Fund as well. These are not yet reflected on the financial statements that you previously received from us."

You will be able to see these changes on our next financial statements in December. I believe, our company's credit rating will become A-."

"I see. The interview is being recorded by our staff here. Moreover, we take all your responses as true especially because you are here with an attorney from a Korean law firm."

"Thank you."

"Here is the last question for you."

"Sure."

"This is one of the things we like the most when we review the documents you have submitted to us. According to those documents, you graduated from Zhejiang University, majoring in accounting. Is it true?"

"Yes, it is."

"And you have HSK level-6, right?"

"That's correct."

"There is a company called GH Parts Company in China. This company was established five years ago, and you recently acquired it. Is it true?"

"That's right. That was Mulpasaneop's factory in China and I bought it."

"Even though you acquired a company in China, you haven't lent any money in China. Even though your company is a small company, we highly recognize this fact."

"Thank you."

"According to your business plan, you can sell more than 300 tons on a monthly basis by using your network and connections within China and also by targeting Korean auto manufacturers that are located in China."

"Yes, I am very confident about it."

"Great. This is all we have for you today. We will discuss it with our foreign

investment committee and will let you know our decision through Manager Angelina Rein here. Also, our staff will visit your company—GH Mobile—in Korea in the near future."

"We are more than welcome to have anyone from Dyeon America."

Vice President Brandon Burke quickly stood up and extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake. Gun-Ho thought Mr. Burke's hand felt very warm.

214 Business Plan 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho came back to downtown Seattle after completing the interview with Lymondell Dyeon.

"You must be very tired."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim said with a smile.

"I'm okay."

"How's your stomach? Are you feeling better?"

"Yeah, I feel fine today. I guess that walking around downtown yesterday helped."

"That's good."

"Is there any good place we can visit around the area?"

"Let's go to the observation tower—Space Needle—before we fly back to Korea tomorrow."

"Sounds good."

Gun-Ho enjoyed the view of Seattle from Space Needle while Attorney Young-Jin Kim was busy with his cell phone.

"You are not looking down at the downtown view? How come you are so busy playing with your cell phone without enjoying the beautiful scenery?"

"I need to talk with someone since I am here in Seattle."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim made a phone call to someone, and then he talked in Korean on the phone for a while; he probably talked with someone in Korea.

"Did you just call someone in Korea?"

"No, this guy is in Seattle right now. He is a friend of mine. He is a professor at the University of Washington."

"Your friend?"

"Yeah. I went to Yale University with him. He is a very smart guy. He said he would come to see me to Sheraton Hotel. Since I came here all the way from Korea, I thought I should at least gave him a call."

"I see."

After having the city tour of Seattle, Gun-Ho and Attorney Kim came back to the hotel. Gun-Ho said to Young-Jin,

"You said you are meeting with your friend here, right? You go ahead and have dinner with him. I think I will just have a hamburger or something for dinner today since I am still not feeling perfectly well in my stomach."

"No, you should come with us. Your friend's friend is also your friend. Don't you think?"

"I just wanted you to enjoy the time with your friend. I don't know your friend, and I don't want to ruin your time with him."

"Don't be silly. He is a very pleasant person to be with, and he is easygoing. You will like him. Why don't you go up to your room and take a rest until he gets here? He said he would come here around 7 pm. I will give you a call once he arrives."

"Okay. I will be in my room then."

Once he came back to his room, Gun-Ho washed his hands and laid down on the bed. He felt exhausted after the city tour.

He was dozing off when his phone started ringing.

"President Goo? It's me, Young-Jin Kim. My friend is here with me; why don't you come down to the lobby?"

Gun-Ho wiped his face with a wet towel before he went down to the lobby.

There was a man standing next to Young-Jin, who was wearing a gold metal frame glasses. He was smiling at Gun-Ho.

"Hey, this is my friend—Soo-Young Han. He is a professor at the University of Washington."

"A pleasure to meet you. I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"I'm Soo-Young Han. I've heard a lot about you from Young-Jin."

"I'm just a person who is selling stuff."

"I'm just a person who has a good academic degree; that's all I have."

Young-Jin added to it.

"This is so nice, a meeting with a person who is selling things, and a person with an education degree only. Let's go out and have dinner together."

"Sounds good. I know a good place where we can have delicious food at a good price."

"Where is it?"

"It's actually close from here. We can even walk to that place. It's a restaurant specialized in seafood."

Young-Jin and Soo-Young seemed to be having a good time talking and laughing and enjoying each other's company. It had been a while since those two friends got together after all. Gun-Ho just walked heading to the restaurant while following them behind.

The seafood restaurant was large, and it was already filled with a lot of people. It wasn't difficult to figure out how popular that restaurant was.

"Wow. The food must be very good here. Their business seems to be doing great."

As Young-Jin commented about the restaurant business, Professor Soo-Young Han added,

"We will have to ask President Goo who is standing next to us. He is an expert in selling stuff."

Professor Soo-Young Han ordered king crabs and wine.

"King crab? It must be very pricey."

Professor Soo-Young Han smiled in response to Gun-Ho.

"It's not expensive at all. King crabs are rare in Korea but not in this area. It will cost about the same price as Galbi* in Korea."

"Really?"

"Young-Jin and I are the people with good academic degrees without money. Since you are selling stuff, you must have more money than us. Would you pay for our dinner?"

"Hey, your father was the prime minister of our country. Behave like one who has a politician as a father."

"Exactly. My father was a prime minister, not me. Moreover, he has retired already. Once a prime minister retired, he is just an old man."

"He must have made a lot of money already."

"Nah. He was just a politician without a sense of making money. I asked him once to financially support me because I was living in a tiny apartment with so many roaches. He declined without hesitation."

Professor Soo-Young Han was a good talker and a good drinker.

Gun-Ho had a lot of king crabs and wine because of Professor Soo-Young Han.

"Isn't running a business hard these days in Korea? The U.S. is asking to renegotiate FTA."

"The industry I am in is a manufacturing business rather than trading business, so it doesn't really get affected by FTA."

Professor Soo-Young Han continued to talk; he looked at Attorney Young-Jin

Kim this time.

"It's not just about Korea. We will see the enormous US-China trade war soon. The book title that I am reading these days is 'Tactics of two groups.'"

"Two groups refer to the U.S. and China, huh?"

"Of course."

Professor Soo-Young Han took out the book from his bag and handed it to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Is it fun to read?"

"It is. The book was written by a professor at Chicago University. The author used to teach at Fudan University as an exchange professor in Shanghai, China. He explains and describes things in a very realistic way in the book."

"Oh, it sounds interesting. I will have to read that book too."

"Let me take a look at it."

Gun-Ho wanted to see the book. It was all written in English, and Gun-Ho couldn't even read its cover. Gun-Ho took a picture of the book cover instead.

"Why are you taking a picture of the book?"

"I have a publishing company, remember?"

"Oh, that's right. Of course, you are interested in good books for your publishing business. You indeed have a sense of business."

While drinking a few glasses of wine, Professor Soo-Young Han kept saying 'nice.'

"This is so nice. Nice to have good friends with me, and nice to have good food as well. Young-Jin, have more king crabs. Once you go back to Korea, it's not going to be easy to eat king crabs again. Eat as much as you want while you can."

"The book you just showed me reminded me of Professor Jien Wang at Zhejiang

University."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Chinese people are good at playing Korean chess too. If the U.S. attacks the king by moving a general, China would defend the king by moving a gun."

"Of course, there are smart people in China. Look at Jien Wang. He is a very smart guy."

"Hahaha. Jien Wang. Of course, he is smart. He is a member of the Financial Service Committee of a province, and a member of the Real Estate Development Committee or something. We need to try harder to establish a stronger economy for our country too."

"Why don't you come back to Korea? And get involved in all sorts of committees related to our economic development, like the Financial Service Committee and the Real Estate Development Committee."

"Hahaha. It's not like I can do all those just because I want to. The politicians who used to participate in a civic group will be heavily involved in those areas."

That reminded Gun-Ho of one of his friends from high school—Min-Ho Kang—who participated in a civic group.

Note*

Galbi — Korean grilled beef ribs.

215 Business Plan 3 – PART 2

The next day, Gun-Ho returned to Korea with Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

As soon as he arrived in Korea, Gun-Ho headed straight to the construction field of his new factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City. Director Yoon and Jong-Suk were there already.

"Jong-Suk, I didn't know you are here."

"We were testing the extruding machines from Germany. We are producing our new product—AM083 Assembly—using this new machine."

"So, how is it?"

"It's really good. It's fast too. Mr. Sakata Ikuzo adjusted the duration of the production time with this machine."

Director Yoon who was standing quietly said,

"The factory is completed. Once you give us the date for the building dedication ceremony, we will prepare for it, sir. After the building dedication ceremony, we can move our factory from Asan City to here at any time. The plant manager said that any day would be good for the ceremony as long as there is no guest."

"What does he mean by a day without a guest?"

"You know, when people move to a new place, they pick a date without a guest like a ghost guest."

"You are an educated man who graduated from Seoul National University, Director Yoon. Do you believe in such superstition?"

"Haha. I don't believe in that. However, there are people who believe in it and consider those things very important."

"I see. I will let you know once I decide the exact date for the ceremony. I should pick a good day where we won't have rain."

"I guess that's why people are trying to find a day without a guest."

It was the day of meeting for GH Mobile directors and managers.

They usually get together in the morning every Monday, so Gun-Ho didn't have to ask for it.

"When do we want to have a building dedication ceremony for our new factory in Jiksan Town?"

"Sir, why don't you pick any good day for the ceremony when there is no guest? However, we want a Saturday for our moving day."

"Why does it have to be on Saturday?"

"We don't work on Saturdays and Sundays, so if we move to the new location on Saturday, it won't affect our production line."

"I will have to pay for those two days."

"We don't need everyone to be present for our moving. We just need a few essential workers. There are some agencies that professionally move factories too. Even though we use their service, we will still need essential workers present on the moving day since we will have to install our machines and equipment and make sure they work fine."

"Who should we ask to attend the ceremony?"

"Let's send out the invitation to our major customers and government officials in the area, and also anyone you want to ask to come, sir."

After the meeting, Gun-Ho was sitting on his chair while looking at the calendar on the wall to determine a good day for the building dedication ceremony.

"A day without a guest? Sh*t, how in the world do I possibly know which day would have no ghost guest? Should I just pick any Wednesday or Thursday?"

Gun-Ho thought of picking the following Wednesday or Thursday, and then he decided not to.

"Maybe I shouldn't just pick any day. Oh, maybe I should ask Chairman Lee about this."

Gun-Ho made a call to Chairman Lee. It had been a while.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Sir, it's me, Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, President Goo. To what do I owe the pleasure of the call?"

"How are you, sir?"

"I am well. How's your business with the factory in Asan City?"

"It's going well, sir. And the new factory in Jiksan Town is finally completed. We will have a building dedication ceremony next week. I'd like you to come to the ceremony, sir."

"Oh, the factory is already fully constructed? It's so fast. I believe I told you that I would come to your building dedication ceremony so I could stop by Onyang and have a hot spring bath there. I will, of course come. Let me see... which day would be good for the ceremony. We need to pick a day without a guest."

"Which day would be a day without a guest?"

"I believe it's Wednesday, but let's ask Master Park to be sure. What was your date of birth, President Goo?"

Gun-Ho gave his date of birth to Chairman Lee while wondering why his date of birth was needed to pick the day.

Chairman Lee called Gun-Ho after about 30 minutes.

"I just talked with Master Park. He said 11 am on Wednesday would be good. You are a person who is supposed to use fire and soil, and Wednesday is the best day for you without a guest."

"Fire and soil?"

Gun-Ho had no idea what Chairman Lee was talking about.

"I will attend the ceremony. I don't have any prior engagement that day, anyway."

"Yes, sir. I will see you on Wednesday then."

After getting off the phone with Chairman Lee, Gun-Ho asked for general affairs manager.

"We will have the building dedication ceremony for the factory in Jiksan Town next Wednesday at 11 am. Please prepare our invitation letter that we can send out to the government officials in the area. Also, please help Director Yoon in preparing the ceremony."

"Yes, sir."

"We will have guests who are coming from somewhere far from Jiksan Town, so we want to serve some food for them. Oh, there seems to be an agency that can handle the preparation of food for a ceremony like ours; you can find one for us."

"I know one good agency for it. They usually send a chef to a ceremony and prepare food in a buffet style."

"Please send out the invitation letters to not only government officials but also to our major customers and vendors."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then picked up the interphone and talked to the plant manager as well.

"Our building dedication ceremony will be held on next Wednesday at 11 am. Once the ceremony ends, we will move our factory right away. Please be prepared for it."

"Yes, sir. I was so waiting for our moving day. We have several problems with our current factory like a leaking roof."

Gun-Ho then sent an email to President Jeong-Sook Shin at GH Media.

"I came across a good book during my business trip to the U.S., so I wanted to talk to you about it. A professor at the University of Washington—Professor Soo-Young Han—was reading that book, and he said it was an interesting book. The book's title is 'Tactics of two groups.' It is being published in the U.S. Also, there is a book called 'Business Model Design Compass.' Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim & Jeong Law Firm was reading that book. I was thinking that maybe we should publish these two books in Korea. I'd like to hear what you think. I haven't read these books; I have attached their pictures to this email. Please take a look at them and let me know what you think. Also, GH Mobile's new factory in Jiksan Town has been completely constructed, and we will have a building dedication ceremony on this coming Wednesday at 11 am. I'd like you to come to the ceremony. One of our staff will pick you up at Jiksan Station."

President Jeong-Sook Shin replied to Gun-Ho's email right away.

"I will take a look at those two books that you recommended and will give you my opinion on it on the day of the building dedication ceremony."

216 Moving to the New Location 1 – PART 1

It was the day of the GH Mobile's building dedication ceremony for its new factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City.

There were about 100 plastic chairs placed in the factory yard and a stage in the front for the speakers. In the back of those seats, food was being prepared in a buffet style. Several chefs in a white chef uniform with a chef hat were busy preparing food. They were from a professional catering service provider. They brought a huge truck with folding tables and green table cloths.

GH Mobile's major customers attended the opening ceremony including the vice president of S Group and some other directors and managers from other companies. Vendors also sent their personnel to the building dedication ceremony. President Young-Sik Park from YS Tech was seen at the ceremony with several tens of other vendors. The branch manager of the major bank was there too, and government officials from Small and Medium Business Promotion Center and Chamber of commerce & Industry, and other business-related departments' officers in the Chungnam province attended the opening. The invitation letters were sent to the city mayor of Cheonan City and the town mayor of Jiksan Town, but they couldn't come because of their prior engagement; they instead sent a manager to the ceremony. GH Mobile also invited the chief of police; however, they sent a patrol car instead and they performed traffic control one hour before the ceremony started. The chairman of the Senior Citizen Association also came to the ceremony, even though no one invited him.

The general affairs manager who was leading the building dedication ceremony announced that the ceremony would soon start.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we will now start our building dedication ceremony. We will start with GH Mobile's President, Gun-Ho Goo's introduction."

Gun-Ho came forward to the stage for his speech. He was wearing a suit with a flower in his breast pocket. Gun-Ho took out a piece of paper that he prepared

for the speech and read it.

"Next, our Director Hyeong-Sik Yoon who has been in charge of the construction will give the report about the Jiksan factory."

Director Yoon was wearing a GH Mobile uniform. He made a report on the size of the factory, the duration of the construction, and the cost incurred, and etc.

They then had a tape cutting ceremony. Gun-Ho was standing in the middle wearing white gloves with a flower on his chest. The vice president of S Group participated in the tape cutting ceremony as the representative of the customer companies. President Young-Sik Park from YS Tech also joined the ceremony representing vendors. Then Chairman Lee and President Jeong-Sook Shin from GH Media joined them. The plant manager and Director Yoon were standing at the end of the line.

The general affairs manager distributed white gloves and scissors to them who would be participating in the tape cutting ceremony. Once the general affairs manager gave a sign, they cut the table with a smile. Journalists from local newspapers started taking pictures. The general affairs manager also took pictures.

After the tape cutting ceremony, the vice president of S Group approached Gun-Ho and extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

"President Goo, congratulations. I am very delighted that our new products' parts will be manufactured in this marvelous factory."

"I appreciate your help and support, sir."

Chairman Lee also quietly offered his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake. Manager Kang who came with Chairman Lee was smiling while standing behind Chairman Lee.

"You did a great job, President Goo."

"Thank you, sir. Thank you for coming. It's really good to see you too, Manager Kang."

YS Tech's president—Young-Sik Park also came to Gun-Ho to congratulate him.

"You have done a great job. I am so proud of you."

"Thank you, sir. I appreciate your support."

President Jeong-Soo Shin of GH Media came to Gun-Ho as well; she was carrying flowers. She was the only female at this grand opening ceremony.

"Congratulations."

"Haha, you brought me flowers."

"Not just flowers, but I've reviewed those two books that you recommended the other day. One of those two books looks good. 'Tactics of two groups' will do the work."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"What do you mean?"

"Its first edition can possibly be sold out. It won't hit a jackpot though, but we will be able to sell the second and third round."

"Haha, really? I will follow your decision on it."

"This factory is enormous and majestic. I feel so proud that GH Media is a part of GH Mobile. Hahaha."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho was so busy with greeting, thanking, and talking with a lot of people that day.

The general affairs manager who was leading the ceremony spoke on the microphone,

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have food and beverage prepared for you behind the seating area. Also, all doors of the factory are now open to you; you can go ahead and have a tour after having your food."

Some people enjoyed the food while some people entered the factory to see the

inside before having their food.

"Oh, this area is going to be a company cafeteria. It's huge. It will be really nice to work at a company like this."

"Did you see the bathroom? It's so clean and luxurious. It has a granite countertop like a hotel's."

The moving to the new factory hadn't completed yet, but there were two extruding machines from Germany already installed at the new factory; they were producing new products.

"Look at that. Those machines are manufacturing products."

"Two machines are working now. I guess they placed those machines here to show the guests of the opening ceremony."

"That's right. It's so interesting to see the products being manufactured in front of me."

People watched products coming out of the machines and some of them took pictures with their smartphones.

Gun-Ho was sitting at a table to have food; he was surrounded by a lot of people. They were talking and laughing while having food. Even on this occasion, people didn't forget to do their business. Some made new connections and expanded their business network at the table while having their meal. They exchanged business cards to each other.

Gun-Ho saw Chairman Lee taking phone calls constantly. He asked Chairman Lee.

"Sir, why don't you come over here and sit with me? And have some fruits. Oh, Manager Kang, please come and join me."

When Chairman Lee got off the phone, he came to Gun-Ho.

"I guess you are busy today since you constantly have to take calls. Please have some food and enjoy the time with me."

Gun-Ho took a fruit plate to Chairman Lee and placed on the table in front of him.

At that moment, Chairman Lee's phone started ringing again.

"Oh, I have to take this."

Chairman picked up the phone.

"Well, I can't find anyone who can buy a building that big. Haha."

Chairman picked up a piece of apple and then put it back down on the plate as he continued to talk on the phone.

"I used to be a big player, you are right. But I am not anymore. My son is running the factory in Ansan City, and I don't get involved in that business anymore. Chairman Park, you kept that huge building for too long. You quit drinking, right? And that probably makes your life boring. Since you can't freely walk, you can't go fishing like I do either."

Gun-Ho who was sitting next to Chairman Lee couldn't avoid overhearing the phone conversation that Chairman Lee was having. Chairman Lee continued to talk on the phone.

"Stop thinking about what others would think about you, and just put that building on the market. What? Your children will then find out? Hmm. Having so many children is sometimes burdensome. I am in a building dedication ceremony right now; I will talk to you later once I go back to Seoul."

217 Moving to the New Location 1 – PART 2

Once Chairman Lee got off the phone, he said sorry to Gun-Ho and picked up the piece of apple that he tried to have earlier and ate it.

Gun-Ho handed a can of juice to Chairman Lee with a smile.

"Someone wants to sell a building?"

"Oh, you heard that? Yeah, I have a friend; our friends call him Chairman Park. He was once very popular. He wants to sell his building."

"Can't he just put the building on the market?"

"That building is not for everyone. It's a 200 billion won worth building that is located in Sinsa Town, Seoul. Not many people would afford to buy that building. Putting on the market won't help; maybe he should post an advertisement in a newspaper or something."

"Then why doesn't he place an ad in a newspaper?"

"He doesn't want to do it. He doesn't want people who know him to find out that he was selling his building. Moreover, he doesn't want it to cause any dispute between his children."

"Why would it cause a dispute between his children?"

"He has a lot of children. Some are from his first marriage, and some are from his second wife. It's really complicated. You'd better be careful with women too while doing your business, President Goo."

"Huh? Oh, sure. I will keep that in mind, sir."

Gun-Ho thought of Mori Aikko in Japan at that moment.

"What if Mori Aikko is pregnant with my child?"

Gun-Ho suddenly got goosebumps.

President Jeong-Sook Shin walked towards Chairman Lee and said hello.

"Umm... Are you, by any chance, the father of Professor Hye-Sook Lee at Sejong University?"

"Yes, I am. Who am I talking to?"

"Hello, sir. I am a friend of Hye-Sook. I am working as the president of GH Media now."

"Did you say GH Media?"

Gun-Ho added some explanation to it so Chairman Lee could understand the situation.

"I recently opened a small publishing company, sir. It is called GH Media. President Shin here is working there and running the company."

"Oh, really? You have a publishing company. I see."

"When I saw you, sir, at the tape cutting ceremony, I was not so sure if you are Hye-Sook's father."

"How is Hye-Sook doing these days?"

"She is doing fine, sir."

Gun-Ho couldn't quite understand the conversation between Chairman Lee and President Shin. Who would ask someone whether his own daughter was doing okay?

"A lot of confusing things are happening today."

When Gun-Ho was wondering about things, the vice president of S Group said loudly.

"President Goo! I am leaving early. It was really nice to see the factory today."

"I am heading back to Seoul too, sir."

It was the branch manager of the major bank.

The guests at the building dedication ceremony started leaving the scene one by one after having food and having a tour of the factory. The police patrol that was parked at the entrance of the factory had left as well. They came to help facilitate the traffic for the ceremony and once most guests left the scene, they left too.

Once the entire guest left the factory, the workers of GH Mobile started having food. They seemed to be hungry after a long day of the ceremony.

Gun-Ho called for the general affairs manager.

"Our workers did such a great job today and they need to be rewarded. Why don't you take them to a restaurant, have dinner with them and pay with the company credit card?"

"Yes, sir. Thank you."

Gun-Ho came back to his office in Asan City. He was dozing off on his chair in his office with the door closed after the long day when someone knocked on the president's office door.

"Please come in."

Gun-Ho woke up and sat straight on his chair. It was the team leader of the product quality assurance team.

"Sir, I've brought the evaluation result of the environmental management system."

Gun-Ho signed on the paper without even reviewing it.

'Sh*t! that stupid man woke me up. It's not even an urgent matter. It could be done later. I was having a really nice dream.'

The product quality assurance team leader passionately explained about something using his hands, and Gun-Ho nodded his head without really listening to it.

The team leader thought he was doing good with the report to the president since

Gun-Ho wasn't saying anything. He then said loudly, "Thank you!" before leaving the room.

After the product quality assurance team leader left the office, Gun-Ho laid down on the sofa and tried to have a nap, but he couldn't fall asleep this time. He, instead, was thinking about the conversation that Chairman Lee had on the phone.

"A huge building in Sinsa Town, Seoul... Its price is 200 billion won. How big would that building be? How much rent would it bring in?"

He couldn't imagine a building that was worth 200 billion won.

"It would be really nice to have a building like that in Gangnam, Seoul. Should I use all of my cash saved in my stock account to purchase that building? I have about 200 billion won."

Gun-Ho then firmly shook his head.

"Nah. I should never use my entire funds at once. I could have a high vacancy rate with that building. That could be big trouble. I have GH Mobile and I am now forming a new company— GH Chemical. I shouldn't risk them. I have a publishing company that I have to take care of too, even though it is a small company. If they can't sell a book, I will have to close it and that would be embarrassing. Won-Chul Jo, Suk-Ho Lee and Byeong-Chul Hwang will laugh at me."

Gun-Ho continued to think.

"If I go down, Min-Hyeok in China will go down with me. Jae-Sik Moon will have to vacate his room at OneRoomTel. I won't be able to see Mori Aikko ever again... No! Those things shouldn't happen. I shouldn't touch my funds in my stock account. Money is like a religion to me!"

Gun-Ho still couldn't forget about the building that was worth 200 billion won.

"How big would it be? 15 floors? 20 floors? It should be at least 10 floors high. Where in Sinsa Town that building would be located at? Maybe at Garosugil Road in Sinsa Town? Nah..., the buildings on that road are all small buildings. None of them shouldn't be worth 200 billion won."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho felt a strong desire to visit that building; he wanted to see it in person.

"I should be with my workers when we move our factory to Jiksan Town on Saturday and Sunday. Maybe I should go and visit that building after moving. I just want to see it. I am not going there to buy that building. Okay, then once the moving is complete, let's go to see Chairman Lee. I can have a good time with him like the old days. He would give me good advice about life as always. Maybe I should go to Ms. Jang's bar at Hannam town with him. Maybe I should ask Master Park to join us too since he is a friend of Chairman Lee."

Once Gun-Ho figured out what to do, he felt better.

218 Moving to the New Location 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho's sister wanted to introduce a girl to Gun-Ho so he could possibly marry her. She was an elementary school teacher, where his sister's daughter— Jeong-Ah was attending. Gun-Ho's sister insisted on him meeting her.

Gun-Ho's sister obtained a level-1 certificate of a social worker after finishing the level-2 certificate. Her husband was doing a transportation work with his own truck, and he was making at least 5 million won per month. Gun-Ho's sister was having a good life; she was driving Hyundai Sonata and she was actively participating in a school parent association at the elementary school which Jeong-Ah was going to. Jeong-Ah was a popular kid at her school; she was in a good class rank and she had a pretty face.

"Jeong-Ah is nominated for a class president. People think her family is affluent since she is living in a 50 pyung large condo. She is so popular at her school."

Gun-Ho remembered her mother mentioning about it. Jeong-Ah was loved and cared for by not only her parents but also by her grandparents. She was having a good life.

"When she was living in a rented old townhouse in Juan Town, she was bullied by her classmates. Now, she is a leader among friends."

Gun-Ho's mother was laughing while she talked about how well Jeong-Ah was doing in school.

Gun-Ho nodded his head.

When he was in high school, he used to get beaten up by his classmates too. He was bullied and he even lost his umbrella to his classmate on a rainy day. He couldn't even look at a pretty girl when she was passing by him. He couldn't be admitted to a decent college and couldn't enjoy a romantic college campus life because his family was poor. The good life that Jeong-Ah was having now was all possible because of money.

"Human beings are greedy and calculating. They quickly recognize who is poor and who is rich even when they were little, and they rank people in that order. They bully their peers who had a poor family too."

People judge a person by their appearance, such as what kind of car they drive and where they live. Teachers were not an exception to this tendency.

Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher was a married woman and she recommended another teacher she was working with to meet with Gun-Ho.

"He is one of my student's uncle. He is running a big company. He graduated from a college in China and his parents are living in a 50 pyung condo in Guweol Town. Why don't you meet with him? You might like him. I was told that he is a good-looking man."

"Which university did he graduated in China?"

Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher called Jeong-Ah's mother to find out which college Gun-Ho graduated from.

"Which college in China did you say your brother graduate from?"

"It's from Zhejiang University. He majored in accounting."

Gun-Ho started getting calls from everyone for the meeting with the elementary teacher in Jeong-Ah's school. His father called, and his sister called and even his sister's friend who was selling insurance called too. Gun-Ho's father even threatened him.

"Son, you have to get married soon. Money is not that important in life. You need to make a grandchild for me. I am getting old and I might not have much time left. I want to see my grandchild before I die."

"Dad, you have Jeong-Ah."

"She is a girl. I need a grandson, so he could take care of the ancestral rites of our family!"

"We don't discriminate grandchild based on their gender anymore, dad. Moreover, there is no guarantee that I would have a son after I get married."

Gun-Ho's mother kept calling him too.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"You have to have a wife who can take care of your family. And the girl whom your sister recommended is an elementary school teacher, which is great. She graduated from Gyeongin National University of Education. She must have studied very hard and well, better than you. Additionally, since she is a public school teacher, she should have an excellent pension, meaning that she is prepared for her retired life. You won't have this kind of opportunity once you get older."

"Okay, mom. I will have to move my factory to a new location first. I will call you next week."

Gun-Ho thought a family could be tiresome sometimes, even though they could give a comfort and protection at the same time.

It was Saturday—the moving day for Gun-Ho's factory.

Gun-Ho was wearing his company's uniform; he headed to the factory. Large trucks of a moving company were already parked in line. He could hear the noise from a forklift truck. The plant manager was standing with his arms crossed while Jong-Suk was running here and there to supervise the moving.

"Hey, hey. Be careful with that box. You need to put that in a wooden box!"

"Hey, you, the truck number 3! Move your truck to the back!"

"You stupid! Move the crane to your left side before walking there!"

Gun-Ho smiled when he saw Jong-Suk moving around busily. The Japanese engineer— Mr. Sakata Ikuzo seemed to be busy as well. He was putting his stuff in a plastic box.

The moving was hard work for the employees.

Moving a residential home was hard enough, and moving a factory was much harder; they had to load and unload large heavy equipment and machines to a

huge moving truck. They weighed several hundred and thousand tons. It was certainly not an easy job. The safety was an issue in moving a factory too. Some of the equipment required welding work.

"Manager Park, I can't take this out. Please come and take a look at it."

"You idiot! You shouldn't do the welding like that. Give it to me."

Jong-Suk Park did welding work himself while wearing a welding cap. After a moment, the machine could be removed from its place and a forklift truck lifted it and moved it away.

Gun-Ho hadn't seen those forklift trucks before; they probably lent them from somewhere.

The moving started early in the morning. After the big fuss about the moving, all of the machines and equipment were moved to the new factory in Jiksan Town. Unloading them was another hard work though. Machines were stacked up in the factory yard, and the workers had to move one by one to an exact location specified for each machine in the production field. The plant manager was testing machines that were already moved to their new spot.

The general affairs manager came to Gun-Ho.

"Sir, why don't you go inside the building? It's too noisy out here."

"It's okay. I can't go inside the building when other workers are working so hard in moving things around."

"We will set up the office with computers and other office machines tomorrow, so we can start working on Monday."

"Did you already request for the phone service?"

"Of course. The workers from Korea Telecom (KT) are already here getting ready to start, along with engineers from a computer company, and electricians."

"Hmm."

"As you instructed, the cafeteria is ready to serve today. The kitchen lady

workers are all here and preparing food for us. Since it's our moving day, they are cooking special food."

"That's nice."

The moving continued until 5 pm that day. The machines start working while making a loud noise. The conveyor belt began to move, compressors were making a noise, and coolants started circulating.

Manager Jong-Suk Park shouted himself hoarse during the moving.

"You did a great job, Jong-Suk. It has been a long day."

"Bro, you have to buy me a drink, okay?"

"Of course. You sound like you did all the moving by yourself."

Manager Jong-Suk Park smiled with his white teeth. He was sweating heavily.

Gun-Ho went to work on Sunday too. It was the second day of the moving.

The office workers were already at the company in Jiksan Town; they were testing their office machines and computers. The workers from the research center were arranging their lab equipment.

"Sir, your office is ready."

The general affairs manager came to Gun-Ho to let him know his office was ready to use.

"Really?"

Gun-Ho entered his new office. It was a large office with a lot of natural light. He could see a big tree from his window. Some of the books in the bookshelf were not standing straight. Other than that, his office was reproduced and looked exactly the same as his previous office in Asan City. His desk, chair, sofa, and the conference table and chairs were very well arranged. He was not sure who cleaned the office, but it was super clean.

"I smell something. Oh, it's a scent from the pot of orchids."

The vendors sent ten pots of orchids to Gun-Ho's office with a card that says, "Congratulations on your moving to your new factory." Gun-Ho selected two pots that he liked the most out of the ten and placed one of them on his desk and put the other one on the conference table.

219 Moving to the New Location 2 – PART 2

It was Monday.

The office workers seemed to be satisfied with their new office. It was clean and luxurious. They walked around the office carefully not to damage anything. The production field looked good too. It was organized better than the one in the Asan factory.

Gun-Ho had the first meeting with managers and directors at the new building in Jiksan Town.

"How many employees did we lose due to the moving? I understand that there are some workers who said they wouldn't be able to commute to our new location."

"We have all of the office workers, but many of lady workers in the production field quit the job. We lost about 30 workers from the production field only."

"It shouldn't cause any problem to the production. Please post a job advertisement to fill the vacant positions immediately. We will have to encourage younger people to apply for the jobs, so please list the benefits we could provide them with the job posting."

"Yes, sir. We will state that we provide lunch, commuter shuttle, a bonus of 400%, and financial aid for their children, etc."

"Director Yoon, you can start demolishing the factory in Asan City."

"The factory in Asan City?"

"Yes."

"The Asan factory is old, but it still can be used. We don't have to demolish it. Why don't we just remodel it instead?"

"No, tear it down please."

"Umm, okay, sir."

"In Asan City, we will build a new factory that would look exactly the same as the factory here. That factory will be used for a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon once it is confirmed."

"Did you say a joint venture, sir?"

"It hasn't been confirmed yet, but Lymondell Dyeon is reviewing our application to do a joint venture with them."

When the meeting was over, Gun-Ho received a call again from his family. They said they set up the meeting with that elementary school teacher for this coming Saturday. Gun-Ho's mother added,

"I decided to make you marry someone by the end of this year."

After mother, Gun-Ho's sister called. She gave Gun-Ho the place where Gun-Ho was supposed to meet with the girl.

"You will have to come to the café at Ramada Songdo Hotel this Saturday at 2 pm. The school teacher lady will be there. You should come without question, okay?"

Gun-Ho didn't know what to say, but he felt curious at the same time.

"Who knows? Maybe I will meet a lady who I've always dreamt about."

Gun-Ho didn't want to upset his family, so he said yes that he would come to see the girl. Gun-Ho thought that he would have to meet Chairman Lee after he met with the elementary school teacher.

Two books written by Japanese authors were published by GH Media. These books were about self-development. President Jeong-Sook Shin sent these two books to Gun-Ho's office.

They were thin books with about 250 pages.

"Who would read a book like this?"

Gun-Ho called for an accounting manager; she was a lady who Gun-Ho thought might be interested in reading a book like this.

"We just published this book by GH Media. Who do you think would buy this kind of book to read?"

"Wow, it's a new book. It's still warm."

The accounting manager smelled the book.

"People prefer to read a thin book like this these days. If a book is thick, they don't want to even pick it up from a bookshelf."

"Really?"

"Can I try it first?"

"Of course, go ahead."

The accounting manager seemed to be excited to take the book with her.

It was Saturday.

Gun-Ho drove to Ramada Songdo Hotel in Incheon. There were three ladies sitting at the café while waiting for Gun-Ho.

"Hey, Gun-Ho, over here."

Gun-Ho's sister recognized Gun-Ho first. There were two other ladies sitting with his sister; one was in her 40s and the other one was in her late 20s or early 30s. Gun-Ho could know intuitively that the lady in her 40s was Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher and the other younger lady was the one who Gun-Ho was supposed to meet with.

"Hello."

"How's traffic? Please have a seat here. This is the lady I was talking about."

The older lady made such a fuss.

"Oh, you look so handsome. I was wondering who would be that good-looking man entering the café, and it was the person we were supposed to meet here."

Gun-Ho's sister seemed to get her hair done for today, and she was wearing a very colorful outfit. She certainly looked different than those days when she worked at a factory with depressed face. She looked more like a lady from a loyal family. Money did some magic.

The young lady in her early 30s looked up to Gun-Ho quietly. Gun-Ho was looking down at her while still standing. She didn't look very attractive to him.

Gun-Ho's sister introduced two ladies to Gun-Ho.

"This is Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher, and this lady here is the one who I talked to you about. She graduated from Gyeongin National University of Education. She is very popular in school. Students love her."

"Nice to meet you."

Gun-Ho said placidly.

Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher said,

"Your brother looks different from you. I thought he was a movie star. Sir, you are running your own business, right?"

"Yes, I am."

"What sort of business do you have? I've heard from your sister that you have an auto parts factory."

Gun-Ho's sister stopped her there.

"Let's stop here. We'd better let them talk to each other alone."

"Oh, that's right. Haha. I just wanted to get to know him. He is so handsome."

Jeong-Ah's homeroom teacher stood up to leave along with Gun-Ho's sister.

"Okay, we will leave you two here then. Good luck to you two."

After two ladies left the scene, Gun-Ho was sitting with the lady who was in her 30s. Gun-Ho couldn't think of anything to talk about with her.

"Please have some tea."

"Okay."

The lady seemed that she didn't know what to say either because she was just fiddling with her cup of coffee.

"Did you study the Chinese language in college?"

"No, I majored in accounting."

"I was told that you went to a college in China."

"Yes, that's correct."

Gun-Ho felt like people sitting at the next table were glancing at them. Gun-Ho wanted to leave the café. Gun-Ho started fiddling his cup of coffee as well without saying a word.

Gun-Ho thought he had to say something because otherwise, he could look so rude to her.

"Is Incheon City your hometown?"

"No, my hometown is Suwon City."

"Do you commute from Suwon then?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I stay in a OneRoomTel during weekdays in Incheon and go back to my home in Suwon on weekends."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho couldn't find any other question to make a conversation with her, and he let out a slight sigh.

'I wish the lady who is sitting in front of me was Mori Aikko.'

Gun-Ho thought of Mori Aikko who was smiling at him.

Gun-Ho felt pressured that he had to say something to the lady.

"How long have you worked as a teacher?"

"It has been five years."

"You get used to teaching children by now then."

The lady lifted her head and laughed. It was the first time Gun-Ho saw her laughing. Gun-Ho didn't think his wife had to be pretty, but he really didn't like this lady who was sitting in front of him. It seemed that the lady knew Gun-Ho wasn't attracted to her.

"Maybe we should be going now."

"Sounds good."

Gun-Ho stood up and then the lady stood up to leave. She was surprisingly short. Mori Aikko was short, but this lady was way shorter than Mori Aikko.

"It must be hard to teach children, right?"

"No, it's okay. It's doable."

The lady seemed to be disappointed. She expected Gun-Ho to ask her to have dinner or take a walk or something, but he didn't suggest anything. Gun-Ho felt sorry for her because all he could think of was Mori Aikko.

"Maybe I am too into a geisha. I might lose my opportunity to meet a great girl because of a geisha."

Gun-Ho then thought,

"Nah. I want a girl who is at least average looking and a bit taller than her."

Gun-Ho asked the lady.

"Where are you heading to after this meeting?"

"I need to meet with my friend. I am heading to Bupyeong District."

"Oh, you do? I am supposed to meet with my friends in Seoul too."

Gun-Ho laughed and the lady laughed along with him.

That was the end of Gun-Ho's first meeting with a girl, set up by his family, and that didn't go well.

220 Moving to the New Location 3 – PART 1

Gun-Ho was driving on a highway; he was heading home after the meeting with the elementary school teacher, which was set up by his sister. He was feeling depressed after meeting with the lady. Gun-Ho was passing by Seohae Bridge when he received a call from his sister.

"How was it? Did you like her? She is a bit short, but she seems to be really smart."

"I don't think she is a good match for me."

"Why not? I really like her."

"Just know that I am not attracted to her. I am hanging up the phone now."

Gun-Ho hung up the phone when his sister was about to say something.

Gun-Ho received a call from his mother a few minutes later.

"How did the meeting go? Your sister told me the girl looked smart."

"Yes, mom. She looked smart, but I don't think I would meet with her again."

"Don't be too picky, son. There is no perfect girl. People say the first girl you meet with is the best girl for you."

"No, mom. I won't meet with her again."

"Your dad and I are desperate for your marriage. Your dad is expecting that you will marry a school teacher."

"I marry a person, not a teacher, mom."

"It would be really nice if you marry a person who is a school teacher."

"I'm not marrying the school teacher I just met. She probably would agree with me. I am driving right now. I will talk to you later, mom."

"Gun-Ho."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho hung up the phone before his mother could say anything more.

Gun-Ho let out a deep sigh while holding the steering wheel.

GH Mobile placed a job posting on the WorkNet website looking for workers in their production field at the new factory location.

Once the opening jobs were posted on WorkNet with salary and benefits, a lot of people applied for the position. The company had 30 vacant positions to fill in, and more than 600 people applied for the job. The positions especially attracted many job applicants because they were employees positions rather than contractors position.

The general affairs manager gave a report to Gun-Ho about hiring workers.

"I was thinking that we select candidates based on papers, and then the managers and directors will give them an interview. And then you sir, will interview each selected candidate as a final hiring step."

"You don't have to go through three steps to hire workers in the production field. Just hire them with two screening processes."

"Yes, sir."

"Who's going to do the interview with the applicants?"

"We haven't specifically decided yet, but I guess the plant manager and the internal auditor will do it."

"Have the plant manager, the internal auditor, you— general affairs manager—and Manager Jong-Suk Park at the production department do the interview."

"Yes, sir."

"For the first screening process, why don't you review the papers with Manager Jong-Suk Park? Since you are in charge of human resource matters and Manager Park will directly work with the new workers at the factory. It makes more sense that you two get heavily involved in the hiring process."

"Yes, sir."

When the general affairs manager was walking toward the door to leave the office carrying the approval sheet with him, Gun-Ho called for him.

"Don't we need to place an order for our winter uniform?"

"That's right. We distribute the uniforms to our workers every other year, and this is the year we are supposed to hand out the uniforms to the workers."

"The current uniform design is outdated and depressing. We have been using the same designed uniforms which Mulpasaneop had used, and we just changed the company name on them. Let's get a new design for our uniforms."

"Yes, sir. I will find a good design company for our new uniform."

"Actually, why don't you talk to the design team leader at GH Media? Here is their phone number."

"Who should I talk to?"

"Talk with Team Leader Min-Sook Oh. Mr. Jae-Sik Moon, who used to work at our security office, is working for GH Media too."

"Oh, I remember that. The lady who came to our building dedication ceremony is the president of GH Media, isn't she?"

"That's right."

"I will call them right away and discuss our uniform design with them."

"Since it is still a business between the two companies, ask them to issue a tax invoice for the design work."

"Yes, sir."

After the general affairs manager left the office, Gun-Ho thought that it was a good idea that he didn't take the president position of GH Media.

"Well, let's see. If the joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon is established, I will be the president of the joint venture company—GH Chemical. I am also the president of GH Mobile, where GH Chemical's raw materials will be used to manufacture products."

It could cause some sort of conflict of interest.

"I have to think about the problems that could be raised because I own several companies. I shouldn't cause any conflict of interest. It doesn't look good to the public either. My companies haven't gone public yet so there wouldn't be any problems for now, but I will have to figure out how I handle this issue."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Chairman Lee at Cheongdam Town.

"Thank you, sir, for coming to my building dedication ceremony the other day."

"Don't mention it. The factory looked really nice."

"Well, I only came this far because of you, sir. You guided me to learn accounting when I worked as a factory worker."

"Haha, I did, didn't I?"

"Speaking of which, I'd like to invite you for dinner. Will you be available next week? We can go to Ms. Jang's bar—Pine."

"You don't have to do that."

"I insist, sir. I'd really like to have dinner with you. Why don't you come with your friend—Master Park—from Philosophy Hall in Gangnam?"

"Master Park? Hmm. Let's do this then. Master Park is retiring from his work with Philosophy Hall. We can celebrate his retirement together next week at Pine."

"Oh, is he retiring already? He is so popular in the field, and he is making good money, right?"

"He wants to build some sort of temple in his hometown—Goesan Town in Chungcheong province—and he wants to spend the rest of life enjoying nature, music, poems and those sorts of things."

"Haha, that sounds like him. Once you decide on a good day for the celebration, just let me know; I will make a reservation at Pine."

"Sounds good. I will let you know after discussing with Master Park."

Lymondell Dyeon sent a letter to Gun-Ho through Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Kim & Jeong Law Firm.

"President Goo? It came in."

"What came in?"

"We finally received a response from Lymondell Dyeon via fax."

"Oh, they sent a fax instead of email?"

"Yeah, they faxed us. They mailed the original letter to GH Mobile."

"Really? What are they saying?"

"Let me read it for you. I've already translated the letter."

[The idea of starting a joint venture which was initially suggested by GH Mobile in Korea highly intrigued us. We subsequently performed an interview with GH Mobile's president—Mr. Gun-Ho Goo—last month. We highly recognize his desire and will to do a joint venture with us.

Lymondell Dyeon's foreign investment committee reviewed GH Mobile's business plan and the interview record with its president, and they rendered a very positive decision. We are pleased to inform you that our committee gave a pass to GH Mobile based on their business plan and the interview record with its president.

Therefore, our staff of Lymondell Dyeon will visit GH mobile in Korea for business survey early next month. The vice president of the international business development department—Mr. Brandon Burke—will lead the team for the visit.]

Gun-Ho was delighted when he heard the familiar name—Mr. Brandon Burke.

"Mr. Brandon Burke is coming, huh?"

"That's really good. We've already met with him."

"When they come to our company, you will have to help us, Attorney Kim."

"Of course. Our law firm is contracted with GH Mobile for this specific matter."

221 Moving to the New Location 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho received the original letter from Lymondell Dyeon the following day by mail. It was written in English and clearly had Lymondell Dyeon's president's signature on it. Gun-Ho called for a staff from the general affairs department and had him type what Attorney Young-Jin Kim said on the phone yesterday.

"Make a document in Word and print out ten of them. We will hand it out to the managers and directors during the meeting."

"Yes, sir."

The meeting started. GH Mobile's managers and directors were sitting in Gun-Ho's office.

The meeting lasted longer than usual because the monthly loss and profit report came out about.

The conference table was situated in Gun-Ho's office. Gun-Ho was sitting in the middle of the table, and the internal auditor who used to work at a bank as a branch manager and managing director was sitting on Gun-Ho's left side. Gun-Ho met the internal auditor for the first time when he was working as a court officer during the Mulpasaneop's court receivership. Director Yoon was sitting next to the internal auditor; he graduated from Seoul National University majoring in Architecture. On the right side of Gun-Ho, the chief officer of the research center was sitting; he had a Ph.D. from Germany. The plant manager who graduated from Inha University, College of Engineering, was sitting next to him. The managers and directors in their 50s or 60s were looking at Gun-Ho's face, who was in his 30s.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Mr. Internal Auditor, please proceed."

"Okay. I will start with the report on the loss and profit of last month. Our sales revenue increased significantly once we started supplying our new product—AM083 Assembly—to S Group. Our sales revenue for last month was 7.2 billion won. It's still short of our goal that our president had set, which is 10 billion won as monthly sales revenue. I suppose we will soon be able to achieve the goal since we are all working so hard."

"Hmm. What about the cost?"

"The cost of sales also increased a bit. It was caused by our recent moving to our new location. Our usual maintenance expenses stayed the same; however, our profit on sales is 600 million won due to the increase in Public Charge and Tax Profit."

"600 million won... Once we make a payment for our financial loan, we won't be left with much."

"For now, that's true. However, we are still hopeful since our loan payment has decreased. We are expecting to see an increase in our ordinary income by the end of this year."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho was listening to the report with his arms crossed. Once it was done, he placed the letter from Lymondell Dyeon on the table.

"What is this?"

"I applied for doing a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon. And this is their response to my application. They will send their staff to our company early next month."

Gun-Ho handed out a copy of the letter to each person in the room.

"I will read it for you all."

Once Gun-Ho finished reading the letter, some of them groaned lightly.

"Hmm, a joint venture..."

The GH Mobile's manager and directors nodded their heads.

Once the meeting was over, the general affairs manager entered the room.

"Sir, Team Leader Min-Sook Oh from GH Media will be here with our uniform's new design today."

"She is coming here?"

"Yes. She said she would be here by noon. Would you like to meet her?"

"Sure, I will be here all morning, anyway."

"She said she didn't want any payment for the uniform design, so I told her we have to pay her; otherwise we will get scolded by our president."

"Right. Tell her to issue a tax invoice for that."

"I already sent our business registration to her so she could issue a tax invoice to us."

"That's good."

When Team Leader Min-Sook Oh arrived at the factory in Jiksan Town, she was astonished. She knew Gun-Ho was a rich man, but she didn't imagine that he would run a company this big. Well, she actually had never seen a factory before that was as enormous as what she was seeing now.

"I've been jealous of the workers working in a big publishing company in the publishing complex in Paju City; however, this company is even way larger than that."

Team Leader Min-Sook Oh was walking around the factory out of curiosity; she had a visitor pass hanging around her neck. When a team leader at the production field saw her wandering around the factory, he yelled at her,

"Who are you? You shouldn't be here. It's not safe. You can get injured here!"

Team Leader Min-Sook Oh was frightened and quickly walked up to the second floor where all the offices were located. She saw workers moving busily in their

office in uniforms, and she felt envious of them. She had always been working in a small office, and when she was standing in this large building, she felt like she was in a government building or something.

The workers in the office area seemed to be so busy that they didn't even realize Min-Sook was there.

"Hello, I came here to see the general affairs manager."

The workers indicated a desk surrounded by partitions.

When Min-Sook approached the desk, she could see the general affairs manager drawing a chart with his computer.

"Hi."

"Oh, hi. Are you Team Leader Min-Sook Oh from GH Media?"

The general affairs manager easily recognized her.

When Min-Sook took out her design drawing from her bag to show him, the general affairs manager suggested,

"Hold on to it. The president is in his office right now. We will hear your explanation about your design there. The general affairs manager took Min-Sook to the president's office. When they entered Gun-Ho's office, a president from a vendor company was about to leave."

"Sir, we have Team Leader Min-Sook Oh from GH Media here."

"Please send her in."

Min-Sook entered the president's office; it was a 30 something pyung large room. Gun-Ho was sitting at the conference table. He was wearing a white shirt with a tie.

"Oh, Team Leader Min-Sook Oh, please come and have a seat."

Gun-Ho showed her a seat.

To Min-Sook's eyes, Gun-Ho looked powerful. It must be hard to get a job in a

company this big, but Gun-Ho owned the company. She couldn't believe Gun-Ho was the same man who she had met in the office close to Gangnam Station.

"Hello, sir."

Min-Sook sat carefully on the chair that Gun-Ho showed. She felt proud that she was working for GH Media, which was a part of GH "group."

Min-Sook started explaining her design drawing to Gun-Ho; her voice was shaking slightly. She had done presentations to many presidents of many companies before; however, Gun-Ho's company was the biggest among them.

Once she finished her explanation about her design, Gun-Ho smiled at her.

"That's good. I like the design. It's fresh and sophisticated. What do you think, Mr. General Affairs Manager?"

"I agree with you, sir. It will make the workers feel energetic and encouraged."

"Let's use this design for our uniform then."

"Yes, sir."

"How's the publishing company doing? When do we expect Professor Jien Wang's book to be released?"

"The translation for that book is already completed. Our chief editor—Mr. Jae-Sik Moon—is working on proofreading and editing. Once he is done with editing, I will start the design work."

"I see."

"President Jeong-Sook Shin likes the fact that design and editing work can be done within the company, so we don't have to outsource those works."

"Haha. That's true. How are the Japanese books that were published last time? Are they selling well?"

"Yes. The first editions are sold out already, and they are printing the second edition. The media talked good about those books, and that helped our sales."

"That's nice."

"Well, I'd better get going then."

"We can't just let you go like this, Ms. Oh; you came all the way from Seoul. Mr. General Affairs Manager, why don't we buy her lunch?"

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

The general affairs manager said with a smile.

222 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 1

– PART 1

The general affairs manager took Team Leader Min-Sook Oh from GH Media to a plum farm close to the GH Mobile factory. Surprisingly, there was a restaurant on the farm that looked like a restaurant in a fairy tale book.

"Wow. I never expected to see a restaurant in this location."

Team Leader Min-Sook Oh was impressed by the unusual restaurant that was situated inside a plum farm. It certainly gave exotic feeling to Min-Sook who was staying most of the time in a busy city—Gangnam, Seoul. Moreover, there was a pond in front of the restaurant with all sorts of various flowers that were blooming.

"This restaurant specializes in Korean food."

The general affairs manager ordered the Korean table d'hote for two, which included more than 20 side dishes. Team Leader Min-Sook Oh thought she was having an extravagant lunch that day. The general affairs manager asked a few questions to Min-Sook, which he had been wondering about.

"Does President Gun-Ho Goo own 100% of the GH Media?"

"As far as I know, yes he does."

"How many employees are there?"

"Just a few. We have our chief editor—Mr. Jae-Sik Moon—two design workers and one administrative worker. Oh, and President Jeong-Sook Shin, who is known as the hand of Midas in the publishing industry."

"You said that the company is located in Gangnam, Seoul City, right?"

"Yes, it is very close to the Gangnam subway station."

"How much is their sales revenue?"

"It is a startup company, so we have no sales revenue yet. GH Development is generating revenue though."

"GH Development?"

"Oh, you didn't know about it? There is another company called GH Development. It is a real estate development company doing mostly rental property business, and its office is right next to ours."

"Really?"

"President Gun-Ho Goo started his business with rental property. I believe he owns a few OneRoomTels."

"OneRoomTels?"

"Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong are working for that company. Ji-Young is my friend, and she is doing bookkeeping there. I've heard them talking the other day; they said there is a rumor saying President Gun-Ho Goo is one of the big players in Gangnam."

"A big player in Gangnam?"

"I wish I could live in Gangnam. He is probably super-rich since he is a big player in Gangnam. They said they heard that rumor from a bank staff, which they have been using for the company business."

"Hmm. Really?"

To the general affairs manager's eyes, Gun-Ho looked mysterious. He heard that Gun-Ho once worked for YS Tech doing accounting work, and then he acquired the company, and now Min-Sook told him that Gun-Ho was a big player from Gangnam. The general affairs manager was confused; he just couldn't figure out what kind of man Gun-Ho was.

'He did seem to be highly experienced in business, but still... How had he accumulated that much wealth at his young age?'

The general affairs manager kept wondering while having his lunch with Min-Sook.

It was fall. The chirping sound of crickets could be easily heard everywhere.

Gun-Ho went back to his TowerPalace home in Dogok Town, Seoul after completing his morning work in Jiksan Town.

"I am meeting with Chairman Lee at Ms. Jang's bar in Hannam Town today. Let's see. The meeting hour is 7 pm. I can have a nap before getting ready for the evening."

Gun-Ho woke up around 5 pm; he had a sweet dream.

"I feel hungry. Maybe I should have a bite."

Gun-Ho then looked at the clock on the wall.

"It's five o'clock. I will have dinner after 2 hours when I get to the bar in Hannam Town. I'd better wait until then."

Gun-Ho changed his clothes and made a call to book a taxi. He decided to leave his Land Rover at home and go to Hannam Town by taxi.

It took quite a long drive from Dogok Town to Hannam Town. It was dark and people's rush to home after work created a slow-moving traffic. Since Gun-Ho left home early, he could arrive at the bar on time. When Gun-Ho entered the bar—Pine—several bouncers in black suits came out. Some of them recognized Gun-Ho.

"Hello, sir. It's good to see you again."

The bouncers gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho.

"Hi, how have you been?"

Gun-Ho tapped their shoulders. He seemed to be relaxed with the bouncers now.

"Is Ms. Jang here?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Yes, she is inside. Let me show you the way in."

"Oh, my gosh. President Goo. How have you been? Hahaha."

Ms. Jang laughed charmingly.

"You seem to become younger and younger every time I see you, Ms. Jang."

"Hahaha. President Goo, are you making a joke to me? You seem to be relaxed these days. Well, I guess that having a romantic relationship on a global scale makes you relaxed."

"A romantic relationship on an international scale? Don't say that. I don't want to be misunderstood by others."

"It's not a misunderstanding."

Ms. Jang pinched Gun-Ho's hand lightly.

"Are they here already?"

"No, they haven't arrived yet. I've already prepared the table in the room. Please go inside."

Gun-Ho entered a large room that was decorated with an embroidered folding screen. There was a big table in the middle and some snacks and tea were prepared on the table for now.

Gun-Ho saved a good seat for Chairman Lee, and he started playing with his smartphone to pass the time.

After a while, he heard a coughing sound with Ms. Jang's voice.

"Chairman Lee, please come in."

"Is he here already?"

"Of course, sir. A younger person is supposed to come early and wait for the elders. Hahaha."

"What about Master Park? Is he already here too?"

"No, he hasn't come yet. He will arrive soon."

When Chairman Lee entered the room, Gun-Ho stood up quickly.

"Please have a seat. You don't have to stand up for me."

Gun-Ho showed the seat to Chairman Lee, which he saved for him. Chairman Lee sat with the folding screen behind him. Ms. Jang quickly followed Chairman Lee and took his jacket and hung on the wall.

"How's business?"

"It's doing okay."

At that moment, Gun-Ho heard a loud voice outside the room.

"Hey, I am here. Why don't you, girls come out and greet me?"

Gun-Ho could hear girls' voices too.

"Why do I see only little girls here? Where is Ms. Jang?"

"Hahaha. I'm coming."

Ms. Jang quickly went outside the room and returned to the room with Master Park. Master Park was carrying a briefcase in his hand.

"You only greet people who have a lot of money, huh? Damn woman!"

Chairman Lee smiled.

"That man still talks harshly to people. Hey, friend, come here and have a seat."

Gun-Ho quickly stood up and bowed to Master Park.

"Hmm. The young man with ShinWangJaeWang fate is here too."

Master Park sat on the floor cushion that Ms. Jang prepared for him. Chairman Lee said while wiping his hands with a wet tissue.

"So, when are you planning to go back to your hometown?"

"I think I'd better leave as soon as possible. Maybe tomorrow is good. So many

people come to see me. I'm tired."

Ms. Jang chipped in.

"Those people who come to see you are paying money for the consultation."

"This damn woman is so greedy."

"You referred a lot of customers to our bar. I don't want to lose that flow of customers coming from your business."

"It's time for old people like us to leave the field. This young man with ShinWangJaeWang fate will send you new customers, Ms. Jang."

"Are you talking about President Gun-Ho Goo? He came to our bar only three times so far."

"He will soon start sending a lot of customers to your bar. Don't worry about it."

Chairman Lee ordered the liquor and dishes to Ms. Jang.

"Please bring in food and liquor. I'd like to have the ginseng liquor you made, Ms. Jang."

"Sure, sir."

Ms. Jang stood up and left the room.

223 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 1

– PART 2

Chairman Lee filled Master Park's glass with liquor.

"Did you finish building the temple-like home in your hometown?"

"Yes, it is completed. I think I spent all of the money I have earned so far while I worked in Gangnam, Seoul to build that temple."

"Aren't you going to feel lonely once you go there? I won't be there with you, friend."

"I will have moonlight and liquor with me; that will be enough for me not to feel lonely. Even though you and I have lived in Gangnam, we don't often meet, anyway."

"That's true."

"Come and visit me often to my hometown—Geosan. If you take a highway, it won't take too long to get there."

"Of course, I will visit you."

"You will probably feel that this is unfair."

"Why?"

"I guess I will go to heaven as I meditate and go through travail; however, you awfully have played with money in your life, and you will go to hell."

"Well, people say that hell is a good place to live in these days."

Gun-Ho had his drink while listening to the conversation between two old men. He couldn't chip in since the elders were talking with their terms and topics.

"Oh, guess what? I brought a present for President Gun-Ho Goo."

"I appreciate that you remember my name, sir."

"Of course I remember your name. You are the man with ShinWangJaeWang fate."

Master Park took out a piece of hanji* out of his briefcase and handed it to Gun-Ho.

It was a wording written in Chinese calligraphy. It was so artistically written that it looked more like a drawing; Gun-Ho wasn't able to read it.

"It's a wording that the founder of Samsung Group—Byung-Chul Lee—liked the most."

Chairman Lee, who was sitting next to Master Park, smiled when he saw the wording. It seemed that Chairman Lee knew about the wording. Master Park then said to Gun-Ho with a serious look on his face,

"You will no longer be able to make money."

"Huh? I can't make money anymore?"

"The luck that allowed you to make money already passed by."

"That's not fair. I didn't even get a publicly-traded company yet."

"Don't worry about it. You will have more and more money."

"You just said I won't be able to make money anymore."

"You won't, but the people who work for you will make money for you."

"Huh?"

"The days when you had to make money by yourself are gone, and the days when your workers will make money for you are coming."

"Oh, I see."

"Do you know what you will have to do from now?"

"What should I do?"

"You have to manage people. You have to be smart in selecting people and allocating them in the right place."

"I see..."

"The president of Samsung Group doesn't know how to make a semiconductor or a refrigerator, and the president of Hyundai Group doesn't even know how to make a car window shield. However, they have smart people who are working for them, and they know how to manage them. Those people are making money for them."

"That's true..."

"That's why I am giving this wording to you. It says 'EuInMakYong, YongInMoolEu.' This wording used to be hung on the wall in President Byung-Chul Lee's office. "

"'EuInMakYong, YongInMoolEu.' What does that mean?"

"'EuInMakYong' means that you shouldn't use a person who you think is suspicious. 'YongInMoolEu' means that once you decide to use that person, do not suspect him."

"Oh, I see..."

Gun-Ho nodded his head. It totally made sense to him why President Byung-Chul Lee would have hung that wording in his office. Samsung Group trusted its employees once they hired them and took care of their future with the company, and that led to Samsung's success, and it eventually became one of the biggest and wealthiest companies in Korea. On the other hand, President Tae-Soo Jeong of Hanbo Group led his company to its collapse as he treated his employees as dispensable.

'It is definitely true. If I doubt Jong-Suk Park, and looked suspiciously at Min-Hyeok Kim, and suspect Jae-Sik Moon, they will question me too. If I decided to embrace them, I have to trust them.'

Gun-Ho carefully folded the hanji* that Master Park offered to him and slipped

into the inner pocket of his jacket.

"Thank you for the invaluable gift, sir. Let me fill your glass with liquor."

"It's really nice to take a glass of liquor from a billionaire. Hahaha."

"We need to celebrate our moment with music."

Chairman Lee called for Ms. Jang.

"Please bring in Geomungo*."

Young ladies in a traditional Korean dress came into the room with Geomungo.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Chairman Lee, Master Park, and Gun-Ho enjoyed their drink for a long time that night while listening to Geomungo. They didn't mind their age gap at all and truly enjoyed the drink and the music together. Chairman Lee and Master Park seemed to have a lot of fun that day; they danced along with the Geomungo sound. Master Park called for Ms. Jang to dance with him. Gun-Ho was astonished by Ms. Jang's dance; she danced like a professional dancer.

Gun-Ho didn't mention the Sinsa Town building that he wanted to ask about to Chairman Lee. He just wanted to enjoy the night with them as it was. He later asked about it when they were walking out of the bar.

"Sir, can I take a look at the building in Sinsa Town?"

"A building in Sinsa Town? You mean the building that President Park wants to sell?"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, if you want to take a look at it, why don't you come to my office tomorrow? You will be staying in Seoul, right? You are not going back to Jiksan Town tonight, right?"

"Yes, sir. I will be in Seoul tomorrow."

"I can't talk for long tonight because I drank too much. Let's have a hangover soup together tomorrow morning. A blowfish hangover soup should be good."

"Sure. I will come to your office tomorrow morning then."

Gun-Ho asked Ms. Jang to call a taxi for himself.

"President Goo, I will prepare better transportation for you. I will ask one of my bouncers to give you a ride to your home."

Gun-Ho saw off Chairman Lee and Master Park. He was watching the car that Chairman Lee was in, leaving the bar when a BMW X5 stopped in front of him. A bouncer opened the door for Gun-Ho.

"Please get in, sir."

Ms. Jang asked one of her bouncers to give a ride to Gun-Ho in the BMW instead of calling a taxi for him.

"It's Ms. Jang's car, isn't it?"

The bouncer who was driving answered,

"No, this is not her car. This car is for the use of our guests only."

"Oh, I see."

When Gun-Ho got in the car, the bouncer asked about the destination.

"Where should I take you, sir?"

"Let's go to Dogok Town. I'm heading to TowerPalace."

The bouncer drove the car without saying a word. The car was driving on the third Han River Bridge when the bouncer talked to Gun-Ho while looking at him through the rear-view mirror.

"We are very interested in you, sir."

"In me? For what?"

"You are the youngest customer in our bar. We have been wondering who you are, and we often talked about you, sir."

"Oh, you did?"

"There are customers who have a rich father. But we heard that you are a self-made, successful man. The customers from a wealthy family usually don't behave. Some of us got slapped in the face by them, and some of us were hit in the face with a drink. But you are always quiet and calm."

"Haha, you think so?"

"I feel like you are an older brother because of your young age."

"How old are you?"

"I am 31."

"Hmmm, you are four years younger than me."

"Can I call you big brother?"

"Suit yourself."

The bouncer gave his business card to Gun-Ho.

"We are actually not the employees of Ms. Jang's Pine, but we are the employees of a security company. We usually take a job of protecting important people. We have been dispatched to Pine and worked there for more than three years now. Ms. Jang is like a big sister to us and takes care of us like a mom, so we have worked there for that long."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho looked at the business card that the bouncer handed to him.

The business card said Security Instructor, Tae-Young Im.

"A security instructor?"

"Yes. I am the team leader. I am the only one who has a license for security

work. However, our team is all black-belt holders."

"What sorts of martial arts can you do, Mr. Tae-Young Im?"

"I have a fourth-degree black belt in Taekwondo and Judo. I can do a little bit of Hapkido too, brother."

Gun-Ho felt weird when the bouncer called him brother.

"You should be good at real fights too, huh?"

"I don't fight. However, when I was in high school in Gangnam, I was number one in fighting."

"Haha, really?"

"Brother, can I have your business card as well?"

"My business card?"

Gun-Ho was not sure if it was a good idea to give him his business card, but he handed it to the bouncer.

"You are in a manufacturing business, brother. If you give us an opportunity to work for you, we will do our best."

They arrived at TowerPalace. Gun-Ho took out an envelope and gave it to the bouncer. The bouncer got off the car, opened the car door for Gun-Ho, and gave a 90-degree bow to him.

"Brother, have a good night."

Note*

Hanji – Korean traditional handmade paper

Geomungo – A traditional musical instrument of Korea

224 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 2

– PART 1

In the morning, Gun-Ho went to Cheongdam Town to see Chairman Lee for the breakfast appointment he made with him yesterday.

"I was waiting for you."

Chairman Lee looked haggard, maybe because of the liquor he consumed last night.

"I know a good place for a blowfish hangover soup. They are really good."

Chairman Lee brought Gun-Ho to a roadside restaurant in Cheongdam Town. The restaurant was already filled with a lot of people even though it was early morning time. It was a large and busy restaurant. The blowfish hangover soup that Chairman Lee ordered came out. Frankly, it looked unsavory, but once Gun-Ho tried it, he was surprised. The taste was actually very good.

"Do you come to this restaurant often, sir?"

"I do come here from time to time. How is it? Is it good?"

"Yes, it's very good."

"I always like their blowfish soup every time I come here."

Manager Kang who came along with Chairman Lee seemed to enjoy the soup as well.

"So, you said you are interested in the building in Sinsa Town, right?"

"Well, yes. I am more likely curious about a building in that size for now."

"The land is 240 pyung, and the total floor space of the building is 4,200 pyung. It's a 19-floor building. It is a newly constructed building."

"What about its location?"

"You want to visit that location? I will draw a map for you if you want to go there. It's on the main road and hard to miss it. There are a bank and a large coffee shop chain occupied on its ground floor. The building brings good profit."

"There must be a garage too."

"Of course. The building has up to basement 4."

"How much money would be required to acquire a building like that?"

"It depends on how much money you can borrow from a bank. The building is worth 200 billion won, so if you can get a loan 80% of its value, you would need 40 billion won."

Before Gun-Ho responded to the amount of money that Chairman Lee suggested, Manager Kang who was having his blowfish soup next to Gun-Ho was frightened.

"Huh? 40 billion won?"

"It's hard to find an individual who has 40 billion won in cash. A large company probably has that much fund; however, a company has to be careful in purchasing a building. It will draw the media's and the government tax office's attention; they would want to know whether the building would be used for business."

"I just want to take a look at the building."

"You have 40 billion won? I guess you do have 40 billion won. You made a lot of money so far."

Manager Kang's jaw dropped and he looked at Gun-Ho.

"I don't have that much cash. If I gather everything from here and there, I might though."

"I can introduce the building owner— President Park to you. He is a Scrooge though."

"No, no, sir. I don't have that much money now. I hope I could save that kind of fund in the near future."

"Okay, here is the map I just drew. It's really easy to find the building. There are two elevators in the building. You can have your own little tour by yourself from the first floor to the 18th floor. There are more than 50 businesses currently running in that building."

"I will stop by the building before I drive down to Jiksan Town, Cheonan today. I have to get back to work."

"Of course. You built a new factory and you have to work harder in the new building."

Gun-Ho arrived at the building in Sinsa Town.

"Hmmm. The curb appeal is magnificent. They must renovate the building not long ago."

Gun-Ho entered the building. A security guard was sitting at the entrance. There is a building directory board that was listing every current business occupied in the building.

"All kinds of businesses are here. There is a construction company and a travel agency. Oh, an entertainment company is here too. There is an accountant's office..."

Gun-Ho took a cursory look at the inside building from the basement garage to the 18th floor.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho came back to his office in Jiksan Town after his brief trip to the building in Sinsa Town.

"Seoul is too busy for me."

Gun-Ho stretched himself while sitting at a large president's office on the second floor of the new factory.

The general affairs manager entered Gun-Ho's office.

"We have completed the hiring process to fill the vacancies in the production field. All of the new employees are in their 20s or 30s. We didn't place an age limit for the positions during the hiring process, but most of the applicants were young people."

"Hmm. Really?"

"We also tried to hire people who live close to our factory. Since our factory is located nearby the Jiksan subway station, many people from the area such as Pyeongtaek City, Osan City, and Suwon City applied for the job."

"The placement has been completed as well?"

"Yes. We are done with the placement, and they will all be here today for orientation. We will distribute uniforms to the new workers and will give them safety instructions and other necessary information regarding the production field today."

"Hmm."

"Why don't we schedule your meeting with them tomorrow morning around 9 am? Since today is their first day, I expect it to be disorderly and they will be mentally busy too. We can have a welcoming ceremony tomorrow and you can meet with them there, sir. I will arrange for our directors and manager to be there too. It will be the new workers' official first day of work."

"That sounds good."

"I heard our previous lady workers who decided to quit the job because of the distance to commute after we moved to the new location, they are regretting their decision."

"Why?"

"First, it's hard to find another job, and also once they saw our new factory, they loved our advanced factory. And they figured that the distance to our new location wasn't that bad as they initially thought since we have a subway station nearby and we provide a commuter shuttle service."

"Well, they made their decision and they left our company. They can't come back now. The company shouldn't allow them to take back their old jobs just because they changed their mind."

"Right. I told them they can't revoke their resignation now. Moreover, we already hired new workers."

"What is the retirement age for the workers in the production field?"

"It's the same age as office workers. It's the age of 58."

"You have to make sure we comply with the policy. There is a reason why those policies were implemented in the first place."

"Yes, sir."

"Let's try not to lay our workers off just because our company needs to go through the restructuring process in the future until they reach their retirement age. That's how we give them the feeling of job security and it will boost their loyalty to the company and strongly devote to our company."

"You are absolutely right, sir."

After the general affairs manager left the office, Gun-Ho took out his electronic calculator and started calculating something.

225 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 2

– PART 2

"The total floor space of the building in Sinsa Town is about 5,000 pyung. How much rent do they charge per pyung? Let's assume the rate of revenue as 6% of the investment amount. Since the building is located on the main road, it should be about that amount."

"Say, the investment amount is 200 billion won. 6% of it is 12 billion won. If I take a loan for 80%, I can use only 40 billion of my own cash won instead of 200 billion won. How much would I be paying for the loan interest then, assuming I borrow 160 billion won? If the interest rate is 3.5%, it's 5.6 billion won. If I subtract that amount from the potential annual revenue of 12 billion won, I will be left with 6.4 billion won."

"Out of 6.4 billion won annual revenue, I need to subtract business expenses, taxes and labor fees and stuff. Given the size of the building, I will need a lot of people to maintain that building, like security guards, mechanics to repair and maintain furnace and electricity. Oh, I will need a cleaning crew as well, about 10 people. How much would be the profit then? 2 billion won? 3 billion won? It's still lucrative. Well, I have to consider the fact that my 40 billion won investment fund would be tied up in that building. It will still bring in profits."

"Oh, shoot. I forgot to take into account the depreciation cost of the building. If I assume half of the building price, and if the depreciable life is 20 years, hmmm, I will end up losing money."

Gun-Ho calculated based on several different scenarios around that building, and he figured that buying that building wouldn't bring that much profit to him at the end.

"Well, a person should use their own cash to make more money. If I take a loan from a bank, the bank will make a lot of money, not me. I will easily see this fact if I assume to borrow 50% or 30% of the building price rather than 80% of it."

Gun-Ho felt a headache and wanted to get some fresh air. He tossed the papers

he used for the calculation into a trash can and walked out of his office.

"Let's go to Asan Spavis and take a hot spring bath."

Gun-Ho drove heading to Asan City.

It was the first day of work for the new 30 workers in the production field. Most of them were in their 30s and they were all wearing a fresh and newly designed company uniform. They gathered in an auditorium with an ID card hanging around their necks. Most directors and managers were there already, including Manager Jong-Suk Park in the Production Department.

There was a large banner hanging on the wall in the auditorium.

It said, "Welcoming our new employees of 20xx to GH Mobile."

The assistant manager of the general affairs department led the welcoming ceremony for new employees. After the Pledge of Allegiance, President Gun-Ho Goo's welcome speech ensued.

"Our company has recently moved to our current location from Asan City to Jiksan Town. Our factory in Jiksan Town is a newly constructed factory. We are highly delighted to have you all as our new family. If you devote your time and energy to the company and increase our productivity as a result, you will absolutely be rewarded."

Gun-Ho tried to make the speech short. After Gun-Ho's welcoming speech, the representative of the new employees, who looked to be in his 30s came forward and took an oath in front of Gun-Ho.

After the oath, the managers and directors were introduced to the new workers. Gun-Ho then offered his hand to each of the 30 new workers for a handshake. He sometimes clapped their backs. There were 6 female workers among 30.

Once the new workers were placed in their position, the production field seemed to exude different vibe. The young new workers were fast, dynamic and vibrant. The seasoned workers who came from Asan factory seemed to move faster than before to keep pace with the new workers.

Gun-Ho received a call from his sister.

"The elementary school teacher you met the other day, she seemed to be interested in you. Would you like to meet with her one more time?"

"No, thank you."

"Why don't you give one more chance to it? She is really a decent lady."

"I am a decent man as well."

"Well, yeah you got the point. You are more decent than her."

"I am in a meeting right now. I'm busy. I will talk to you later."

"Okay, Gun-Ho. If you happen to change your mind, just let me know any time, okay?"

The factory policy had been intensified after they moved to the new factory in Jiksan Town. It just happened that way. When Gun-Ho had acquired the factory in the first place, the total number of employees was 250, and now there were about 240 people working there, including the new 30 workers. The production output had increased while the number of workers stayed about the same. It made the labor cost lower in the production cost.

"Here is the current status of our labor cost."

The general affairs manager brought a chart to Gun-Ho to give him a report.

"The labor-to-revenue ratio has reduced to below 25%."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Hmm."

The chart that the general affairs manager brought to Gun-Ho was about labor-to-revenue ratio and labor productivity. The chart wasn't of course made by the general affairs manager himself, but it was prepared by the staff in the general affairs department.

"It's getting better and better. Let's try to work harder."

"Yes, sir."

It was lunchtime, and Gun-Ho went down to the company cafeteria with the internal auditor. There was a long line of workers waiting for their turn to receive their meal, but Gun-Ho and the internal auditor could get their meal right away as the general affairs manager guided them. The meal provided by the company was Korean food with cooked rice and several various dishes.

"You are having lunch here today, sir."

The plant manager came a bit late and joined Gun-Ho. Other workers who spotted Gun-Ho having lunch there tried to sit at a table as distant as possible.

Gun-Ho calculated the cost of the meal.

'240 workers are having lunch here every day. If adding the night shift workers, there will be more than 300 people eat here on a daily basis. If I assume a meal for one person cost 4,000 won, the daily cost of the meal will be 1.2 million won. There will be no rent for the place. So if I give this business to someone outside the company, they will make their living with it. Should I ask my sister and her husband to do this business? Nah. It's not a good idea to bring my own family or relatives into the company. Let's just directly manage the cafeteria for now.'

While Gun-Ho was thinking about the cafeteria business in his factory, someone came to the table where Gun-Ho was having lunch with the internal auditor and plant manager as he gave a cup of water to each person. That dispersed his thoughts.

Gun-Ho was taking a break in his office when he received a phone call from the branch manager of the major bank in Gangnam.

"President Goo, do you play golf?"

"I haven't been in the field for a while. Why are you asking?"

"We just received a ticket from our bank headquarters. They instructed us to meet with the presidents of the major companies that our bank is working with and have a round of golf. I'd like to invite you for it."

"As you know already, we have recently moved to our new location, and I've been hectic since the first day of moving. I won't have time for golf. Instead, I'd like to meet with you."

"Something happened?"

"I need to talk with you about a real estate matter. When will you be available?"

"You can come any time. We are always at the office."

Gun-Ho made a document using Excel in his office by himself.

He made a chart about RiverStar building in Gangnam. It was about its land, the size, and the lien, etc.

He also attached the real estate registration and the cadaster of the building and the land to the excel chart. He also included the pictures of the building's exterior and interior that he took with his smartphone when he had visited the location.

"I should bring all these documents when I go see the bank branch manager tomorrow. I can't just go and talk with my mouth alone."

Gun-Ho smiled as he stapled the document altogether.

226 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 3

– PART 1

Gun-Ho received an email from Jae-Sik Moon who was working at GH Media as a chief editor. He sent to Gun-Ho the translated manuscript of Professor Jien Wang's book— Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century. It was the final version with all necessary editing work and ready to be published. The book became even thicker after being translated into Korean and it was 400 pages.

Jae-Sik Moon changed the book title from 'Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century' to 'Economy Prospect in China for the 21st Century.' He modified some parts of the translated version to make it smoother while giving more flavor to it.

"Is this really done by Jae-Sik? Wow. I knew he was good, but I didn't know he was this good."

Gun-Ho started reading the translated manuscript of Jien Wang's book. He thought he should read it before giving Jae-Sik any comment or response. However, it was too much.

"Whew. It will take forever to finish this book. It hurts my eyes too."

Gun-Ho replied to Jae-Sik's email after finishing only the first ten pages.

"I received the manuscript. It looks good. I think it is ready to be published."

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Min-Hyeok Kim who was working at Suzhou City, China. He said he found a good storage building.

"The building is 300 pyung, but the land is huge. It's 1,000 pyung. With the yard this big, it would be easy for vehicles to make turns."

"I guess we can build an additional building there in the future if necessary."

"Of course, there is plenty of space for an additional building."

"So, is the owner selling the land?"

"He said he would. He said the land is not Hua fa land, but it is Zhuanrang land, so it is transferable."

Gun-Ho was somewhat knowledgeable about real estate in China.

"Zhuanrang?"

"Correct. Zhuanrang land is transferable and can be used as collateral for a loan while Hua fa land is not since it was leased by the government for free. It cannot be transferred, leased, or used as collateral."

"Sometimes they said it is Zhuanrang land, but later we might find out it is not. Many Korean companies fell into that trap when they did business in China. Is the seller an individual?"

"No, it's a clothing manufacturing company."

"What about the location?"

"Its location is not bad at all. It's close to our factory and Suzhou Industrial Park."

Suzhou Industrial Park is an industrial park located in Suzhou City, which was jointly developed by China and Singapore. Many large Korean companies are located in this industrial park including Samsung Group.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Even though we might later find out it is not Zhuanrang land, it is still attractive since it is located close to the industrial park."

"Why don't you come and visit the storage building to make sure you like it?"

"Well, Suzhou City is a good location anyway. Not just Suzhou Industrial Park, but Hyundai and Posco are there too. Volvo, Mazda, Nissan, and other global companies are there as well. Let's get the storage building in that area. It would be even better if that land is really Zhuanrang."

"You know what? I took a position as a general manager in our elementary

school alumni association here in China."

"Oh, for the classmates from elementary school who are in China right now?"

"Yeah. I didn't know there were so many of us here. We did once gather in Shanghai. 20 people came, which is a lot. Most of them are employees in a branch office of a company in Korea. They are team leaders or assistant managers in their companies. That is the usual position in a company at our age."

"Really? I guess it will help your sales, huh?"

"Yeah. They actually helped me a lot already."

"When you meet with them, you can use our company credit card to have liquor or food with them."

"I'm not going to use the company credit card for everyone from that association, but I will if I meet some of them who are working for a company which could possibly make a contract with us."

"How's it going with the girl who you have been dating? You said she is teaching English in Shanghai International School."

"I think I will marry her next spring. I guess I will have to have a wedding twice."

"Why?"

"Since she is a Korean Chinese, we will have to do the wedding once in China and once in Korea."

"Oh, hahaha. So you get married two times, huh?"

"My mom asked a fortune teller about my fate, and she said I am destined to marry twice."

"That sounds about right."

"Hahaha."

"As to the storage building, I will come to China sometime next week. I will talk

to you later then."

Gun-Ho went to the bank in Gangnam to meet with the branch manager.

"There is a real property that I am interested in. It is located at the entrance of G Garosugil Road in Sinsa Town. It's a 19-floor building with a 370 pyung land, and its total floor space is 4,200 pyung."

"It must be very expensive."

"I was told that its current fair market price is 200 billion won."

"Wow. It is expensive."

"If I purchase this building, how much can you support me?"

"I will lend the money as much as you want; however, if you buy the building personally, not with the company's name, DTI (Debt to Income) will apply. Moreover, Sinsa Town is a restricted area for speculation, so we might not be allowed to lend you a significant amount."

"What if I buy it with my real estate development company's name?"

"If you buy it for business purposes, it would be a different story; however, since the building is very expensive, I will still have to discuss it with our head office."

"How much cash do you think I have to bring in at a minimum?"

"I would say that you would need at least 40% of the price. Well, it might work with less than 40% of the price since we can use the security deposit. How much cash are you thinking of investing in?"

"I intend to use 20%."

"Even 20% of the price will be 40 billion won. Do you have that much cash?"

"I came here to discuss with you because I have it."

"Really? You have 40 billion won in cash. Wow. You are indeed a big player in the field."

The branch manager was astonished, and the assistant manager of the bank who was sitting outside the office turned his head to the office when he heard the sound of the branch manager.

"Either you buy that building or not, why don't you store your 40 billion won in our bank?"

"I have it stored in my stock account."

"We do stock trading too. Why don't you move to our bank? We are very good at stock trading."

Gun-Ho didn't respond to the branch manager's suggestion, and the branch manager started thoroughly looking at the documents that Gun-Ho brought. He might have felt embarrassed.

"The building owner has a lot of debt, and some of them are from our bank. You can take it over once you buy the building."

"Maybe I should contact the owner."

"The owner with this expensive building must be rich. Why does he want to sell the building?"

"He has children who have different mothers and that gives him a headache."

The branch manager grinned.

"That makes sense. Once the building owner dies, the children from the current wife will inherit more than the children from prior spouse. And those children won't stay quiet."

"What if the first wife is still alive?"

"Well, in that case, we will have to see who is recorded as his legal spouse."

"Mr. Branch Manager, you probably want to be very careful with women too."

"Haha. I am not capable of doing anything complicated like that. The only asset I have is a condo that I am living in. President Goo, you haven't been in any

complicated situation like that?"

"I don't do that."

Well, Gun-Ho had a beautiful woman already—Mori Aikko. He had no reason to look for another woman.

"President Goo, why don't you leave the documents with me, which you brought? I will examine and analyze it. I am anticipating having another good business with you, sir."

227 RiverStar Building in Gangnam 3

– PART 2

Gun-Ho received a book from Jae-Sik Moon.

"Hmm. Finally, Professor Jien Wang's book has been published. It's thick."

Gun-Ho opened the book. On the other side of the cover page, Professor Jien Wang's profile was listed. It said that he obtained his Ph.D. from Yale University and taught at Yale. He is currently teaching at Zhejiang University in China. There was a brief profile about the translator who translated this book into Korean too. He was an instructor at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies.

Gun-Ho turned the first page over. There, he could see the name of the publishing company and publisher, etc. The publishing company was GH Media, and the publisher was Jeong-Sook Shin; the chief editor was Jae-Sik Moon. The name of the design team's leader—Jeong-Sook Oh was shown there too. The price of the book was 15,000 won. Maybe given the thickness of the book, it was priced high.

"Let me see if there is any book review on this book in a newspaper."

Gun-Ho searched the Internet. The three major newspapers: Chosun, Joongang, and Donga Ilbo were making an issue of the book. Even a small newspaper in a province was talking about the book. Maybe because the author was a college professor in China, who used to teach at Yale University. Moreover, the economy prospect in China for the 21st century as the book title indicated is closely related to people in Korea.

"I hope it sells very well."

Gun-Ho opened the book while saying that. There were many charts and diagrams, it certainly looked not a fun book, unlike a novel.

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"How many workers do we have, who is above team leader?"

"We have 62, sir."

"Then, please buy this book, 62 of them from online and hand it to all of them."

"It's Economy Trend in China for the 21st Century."

"Tell them to read it and make a book report. The one who submits the best book report will be awarded."

"Yes, sir."

The general affairs manager made a note about the name and the publisher of the book while standing in front of Gun-Ho."

"GH Media? It's one of our companies?"

The general affairs manager seemed to be delighted.

Gun-Ho went on a business trip to China. He was carrying the book that Professor Wang authored. He was carrying several Korean versions of the book. Once a book was published, the publisher usually sent the book to the author by mail. Gun-Ho wanted to bring it to Professor Wang himself.

Once he arrived in China, he didn't go to Suzhou City where Min-Hyeok was, but he went to Hangzhou Jien Wang was living in.

Gun-Ho was thinking of calling Jien Wang and asking him to come to the hotel where he was staying, but he decided to visit him to his workplace instead, which was his research office at Zhejiang University.

"Professor Wang? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo. I just arrived in China and I am on my way to your research office."

"What? You are coming to my office? I am in the office by myself and writing a paper. I will be here waiting for you."

When Gun-Ho and Jien Wang met, they hugged each other.

"It has been a while."

"Guess what? I brought you the book you wrote. It's a Korean version that has just been published in Korea. The publishing company will send it to you soon by mail, but I wanted to give it to you myself. I brought two of them."

"You could just send them by mail. It is kind of heavy to carry."

Jien Wang looked delighted, he was smiling.

"The Korean language is so beautiful. It is a phonetic language. I am envious of it."

"The Chinese language contains profound meaning."

"The Chinese characters are not easy to use on the Internet, and it is hard to write a foreign language in Chinese. If we want to write a foreign name such as Obama or Trump, we have to make it with Chinese characters. That's difficult."

"We have 24 letters in the Korean language."

"Exactly. I am so jealous. It's so easy to learn. You know what? There are three things that Chinese people will never know in their entire lives."

"What are they?"

"First, since the land of China is so big that they won't be able to visit them all before they die."

"That makes sense."

"Secondly, we have so many different cuisines in each province that they won't be able to taste them all before they die."

"Hahaha. Really?"

"Can you guess the third one?"

"I don't know."

"Chinese people die without knowing all of the Chinese characters. Even I sometimes encounter a Chinese character that I don't recognize because it is rarely used."

"Hmm. That's a bit sad."

"Well, I have my good friend here who came all the way from Korea. I will have to have a drink. I will buy you a drink today. I received a royalty from GH Media."

"That was already several months ago."

"Well, I at least want to buy you a drink, President Goo. You helped me to publish my book in Korea. Let's go and have Shaoxing wine."

Professor Jien Wang took Gun-Ho to a shabby bar at Hubin Lu.

"I come to this bar sometimes after work. I enjoy drinking by myself. My favorite menu here is a bottle of Shaoxing wine with a seasoned eggplant."

"This seasoned eggplant and water parsley taste similar to a Korean dish. I like them."

Gun-Ho ate a lot because he really liked those seasoned vegetables. They sautéed the vegetables with a little bit of oil, and they were really good. A pork dish came out.

"This pork dish is a special order for you, my friend. You eat pork, right?"

"Sure. It's good."

The port was sautéed with sliced onions.

Gun-Ho thought that the bar was a type of bars where a professor with not much money would come just like Jien Wang.

"I once wrote something while I was drinking at this bar. I sent it to a newspaper. The title is 'thinking of my friend.'"

Jien Wang took out a newspaper from his bag, it looked a bit dated. Jien Wang's writing was in the newspaper.

Gun-Ho started reading it. In the writing, Jien Wang talked about his Korean friend—Gun-Ho as well. It talked about how he met Gun-Ho for the first time,

and how Gun-Ho was developed into a successful businessman. He also talked about how kind Gun-Ho was to him when he attended a conference in Korea along with Korean people's sense of public order and cleanliness.

"Thank you, my friend. You talked good about me."

"I really meant it."

Gun-Ho truly appreciated it.

"Let's keep our friendship forever."

"Sure. We will be friends until we die."

Gun-Ho was feeling good and enjoyed his drink with Jien Wang that night.

Gun-Ho headed to Suzhou City to see Min-Hyeok. Min-Hyeok seemed to gain some weight.

"You gained some weight. Maybe because Chinese food here is a bit oily."

"I think that's because I ate too many dish when I drink with customers as part of my sales activities. My fiancée already nagged me."

"What did she say?"

"She said I need to lose weight. She even gave me some kind of pills that would help me lose weight."

Min-Hyeok showed a bottle of pills to Gun-Ho, which said Jianfei.

The factory in China was doing great, it was vibrant. Min-Hyeok gave a brief report to Gun-Ho on the company's current loss and profit status. Gun-Ho could see how hard Min-Hyeok had been working because of the stock option.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"You have been working so hard."

"Yeah. I actually need some extra money, so I worked as much as I could. I am

expecting to get some extra income from the stock option at the end of this year."

"Is it because of your wedding?"

"I will have to find a place to live with my fiancée. The rent is too high, so I am thinking to buy a home in Suzhou City. I will live with my wife right after we marry next spring."

"Do you think you would get a good dividend this year?"

"If things go well as expected, the ordinary income will be 2 billion Korean Won. My stock option is 5% of it, so I will receive an extra 100 million won. There is a condo complex in Suzhou City and it is called Cui Yuan Huayuan. It is close to our factory. I think I can buy a 25 pyung condo there with a loan. It costs 150 million won."

"The price of the condo will increase in the future?"

"I think so."

"Did your fiancée see that condo already?"

"No, she hasn't yet. Her name is Dingding. She will quit her job at school in Shanghai once we marry."

"Dingding? The teaching job in Shanghai International School is hard to get, isn't it?"

"Since she studied in the U.S., she can easily find another job here too. She was already offered a position from Suzhou International School."

"Really? That's great."

Gun-Ho thought Min-Hyeok was doing really good with his life.

228 Acquiring a Storage Building in Suzhou Industrial Park 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho went to China and headed to Suzhou Industrial Park with Min-Hyeok Kim to see the storage building on the market for sale. He was told that the owner was running a clothing factory in the vicinity of the area. Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok headed to the clothing factory to meet with the owner.

The factory was not very clean. A lot of people were working there, and tons of products were piled up in the corner. The owner looked to be in his 60s, and he had dark skin.

"I bought that storage to store our products manufactured in this factory, but the business has shrunk, so I want to sell that storage."

"The land is owned by the government, isn't it?"

"Of course. All land in China is owned by the government, and we just get the right to use the land."

"But you still call it 'Zhuanrang land' to indicate that it is transferable."

"That's right."

"How much are you asking to transfer the storage?"

"Is your company buying it? The buyer company must have a business license registered with the Administration for Industry and Commerce."

"We have it."

"The land is 5 Mu, which is 3,300 m². You have to give me at least 500 Yuan per m²."

"How much would the entire land price be if the price per m² is 500 Yuan?"

While Min-Hyeok was pulling out his electronic calculator, Gun-Ho just quickly

calculated the price mentally.

"It's 1,650,000 Yuan. So it would be 297 million won. We can just assume it's about 300 million won."

Gun-Ho surely had a distinctive sense in numbers, which differentiated him from other people.

"I am not sure if it is a fair price for that storage. It is located in the wilderness."

"Maybe we should contact the president of Jinxi Construction Company with whom we used to run a joint venture together. We can ask for his advice."

"That's a good idea."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok went to see Chinkkweo Seon—the president of Jinxi Construction Company. They carried the cosmetics that Gun-Ho purchased at the duty-free shop at the airport as a gift.

"Oh, G-jjong (President Goo)!"

It had been a long time since Gun-Ho heard someone calling him G-jjong.

"How is your business?"

"It's going okay. How is your auto parts factory in Suzhou City?"

"We are doing okay too."

When Min-Hyeok said that, everyone laughed.

A lady staff in the office brought Longjing tea.

"Please have some Longjing tea. The leaf was harvested during the spring."

Gun-Ho continued to talk while having his tea.

"I want to buy a storage that is located in Suzhou Industrial Park. They are asking 500 Yuan per m², and I am not sure if it is a fair price in that area. We are here to hear your advice."

"The industrial park is so large that prices vary depending on the area. A real property is selling in some areas in the same industrial park for 700 Yuan or 800 Yuan per m² while some are selling lower like less than 100 Yuan per m². The size of the industrial park itself is 288 km²."

"288 km²? It's larger than Gimpo City in Korea."

The president of Jinxi Construction Company suggested that he would see the storage himself.

"Why don't we go there together? I can take a look at it for you. If you need to build an additional building in that land, I can help you with that too."

When the president of Jinxi Construction Company saw the storage, he shook his head from side to side.

"3-Flow (electricity, water and sewer, and road) is good. I don't see any leakage on the roof either. However, its location is like in a wilderness. There is nothing around the storage. You will certainly need a security guard. You will need two of them to guard the storage for 24 hours."

It seemed that the president of Jinxi Construction Company met the seller before.

"You came to our construction company to get a price quote for your additional factory, didn't you?"

"Oh, you are the president of Jinxi Construction Company."

"Aren't you building an additional factory yet?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I don't think I need it anymore. The business is not doing well. I even put my storage on the market for sale."

"500 Yuan is too expensive given the location. I feel like it is located in the middle of nowhere. These two presidents are my friends from Korea."

"Well, I need that money. I can't lower the price."

"President Goo, let's go. I will find a better storage for you."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok walked out of the storage following the president of Jinxi Construction Company when the landowner grabbed Jinxi Construction Company president's arm.

"Come on. Okay. I will sell it for 480 Yuan."

Gun-Ho made a purchase contract for the storage at 480 Yuan per m², and he let Min-Hyeok Kim sign the contract as he gave Min-Hyeok a power of attorney.

Gun-Ho stopped by Shanghai and went to see Seukang Li with a carton of cigarettes that he purchased at the airport duty-free shop. Seukang Li was a smoker. When Gun-Ho arrived at his office, he was in a meeting, so Gun-Ho waited for him in a waiting area.

In the waiting area, there was another person waiting to see Seukang Li. He looked dandy and seemed to be two or three years older than Gun-Ho. At that moment, Gun-Ho received a call from the internal auditor from GH Mobile. The dandy man in the waiting area heard Gun-Ho talking on the phone in Korean, and he asked Gun-Ho after Gun-Ho got off the phone.

"Are you Korean?"

Gun-Ho was surprised when he heard the man speaking Korean to him.

"Oh, you are Korean. Are you here to meet Director Seukang Li?"

"Yes, I am."

Gun-Ho then continued to wait for Seukang Li with his eyes closed; it was boring. The dandy man talked to Gun-Ho.

"Are you, by any chance, in the entertainment field?"

"No, I am in the manufacturing industry."

"If you are in a manufacturing field, why do you want to meet the director of the

bureau of cultural affairs and radio broadcasting, film, and television?"

"Oh, Director Seukang Li? He is a friend of mine. I just wanted to see him since I was in the area."

"Your friend?"

The dandy man's eyes widened.

It seemed to be hard to believe that Gun-Ho was a friend of a high ranked government official in Shanghai.

"I work in an entertainment management company."

The dandy man gave his business card to Gun-Ho.

"A manager in BM Entertainment Management?"

"That's right."

"The famous singer Honey Jeong and other girl groups are with BM Entertainment, right?"

"That's correct."

The dandy manager started acting arrogant.

"If you have your business card with you, please give it to me."

The entertainment agency manager said as he was crossing his legs.

Gun-Ho had to give his business card to the dandy manager since he gave Gun-Ho his business card already. The entertainment agency manager closely looked at Gun-Ho's business card. It had three position titles on it: President of GH Mobile, President of GH Development, and Co-President of GH Parts Company in Suzhou City.

The dandy man quickly sat straight when he realized Gun-Ho was not just an employee of some company but actually a company owner. He then carefully looked at Gun-Ho's face again.

'He looks young. Maybe he has a rich daddy.'

229 Acquiring a Storage Building in Suzhou Industrial Park 1 – PART 2

The entertainment agency manager was wondering about Gun-Ho when Director Seukang Li came to the waiting area.

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Hey, Seukang Li."

The two men hugged each other; they were so glad to see each other. The dandy man was just watching them hugging.

"Did you wait for long? I am so sorry. Party secretary was in the meeting, so it took longer than usual."

"No problem. I hope I am not interrupting your day at work."

"I'm good. I am not busy anymore."

"I brought Professor Jien Wang's book for you. It's a Korean version."

"I didn't know he published his book in Korea. Wow. It's written in Korean; I can't read it."

"Don't try to read it. You just keep it as a souvenir."

"Haha. I will keep it. Hey, why don't we go to my office?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

When Seukang Li grabbed Gun-Ho's hand and tried to leave the waiting area, the entertainment agency manager came to him.

"Sir, could you reconsider our request for the performance?"

"Oh, that? I already told you that we can't allow it. We already sent you our decision. Why are you still here?"

"Please reconsider the decision. If you allow it once this time, I will never ask for it again."

"That's not possible. It will cause heavy traffic and raise a safety issue; we can't allow it."

Seukant Li acted cold to the entertainment company manager.

Seukang Li looked at Gun-Ho and smiled.

"Let's go to my office!"

Gun-Ho followed Seukang Li to his office, and the dandy manager looked devastated.

"Sir! Sir!"

The entertainment agency manager kept calling Seukang Li, but Seukang Li didn't respond to him.

Gun-Ho and Seukang Li entered his office. It was a large office with the Red Flag with Five Stars. There was a big wooden desk with a nameplate; it said 'Director Seukang Li.' The room certainly looked like a high ranked government officer's room.

"What is that entertainment agency manager asking for?"

"He wanted to rent a gym and do a massive entertainment performance there. He planned to bring popular Korean group singers. Their Chinese business partner came this morning to request our approval again, and I had to send him away."

"That will cause some traffic problem?"

"Well, yes, kind of. We actually have other important reason. We have to protect our own entertainment business here in China. K-pop is way too popular in China among young people. Chinese entertainment needs an opportunity to grow too. You would have done the same thing if you were in my shoes."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho nodded his head; he thought Seukang Li made sense.

"Oh, how is your auto parts factory business in Suzhou City?"

"We are doing good. I know you have been helping us a lot. I was told that you introduced the president of a window manufacturing company to Min-Hyeok."

"Did it help the business? I just told him that there is a company like that."

"Min-Hyeok often told me that our sales revenue increased because of you."

"President Min-Hyeok Kim is working so hard, and he is enthusiastic. I wish the company presidents in China work like him. There are a few government-owned companies that our bureau manages, and I wish those companies' president work as hard as President Min-Hyeok Kim."

"Thank you for saying that. Oh, you know what? I brought you something. Since you love smoking, I brought you a carton of cigarettes."

"Haha. Thank you. I quit smoking, but it's not easy. During the meeting earlier, the party secretary told me that he could smell smoke from me. I guess I will have to quit smoking in order to succeed in my career."

Gun-Ho initially wanted to have dinner with Seukang Li, but he didn't ask him for it. Seukang Li looked so busy and exhausted already.

Gun-Ho came back to Korea and presided over a meeting. The meeting with directors and managers was held once a week on Mondays in the morning. Another meeting, with everyone above an assistant manager, was held once a month in an auditorium.

"How are the 30 new workers doing?"

"They are good. Most of them are experienced workers, and I think they would do a really good job even if they were placed in an office. They are working in a production field, but many of them have very good qualifications."

"That's good to hear."

"They are exceptionally good at producing more products in a short period of time. Our seasoned workers work faster than before; I think they are sensing that they might lose their job to younger workers."

The sales director made a report.

"The major customers of our new products—S Group—will likely experience some changes in their company structure."

"Did you hear anything specific?"

"People say that the vice president of S Group will resign soon."

"He is still too young to retire, isn't he?"

"His colleague who is younger than him is joining the company as a president. So he submitted his letter of resignation voluntarily."

"Really? He was good to us and our business. That's a shame."

The plant manager and the chief officer of the research center who were both older than the vice president of S Group looked depressed.

After the meeting, Gun-Ho was sitting at his office by himself when the chief officer of the research center entered the office.

"Please have a seat."

Gun-Ho showed a seat to him.

"As you decided to close the research center, 24 research center workers out of 30 have been reallocated to other departments."

"Are they happy there? Or are they complaining?"

"They seemed to be doing fine. To be honest with you, sir, those workers in our research center were not really researchers."

"Then why did you hire those people to work in the research center?"

"When we were filling in the positions in the research center, the previous

president of Mulpasaneop instructed to find necessary workers from other departments within the company, rather than hire new people. Some of them now went back to their old positions, and they might be happier there."

"So, there are only 6 people in the research center right now?"

"Yes. We still need them to keep the research center's equipment working."

"Did you say, those six workers left in the research center are superior to other workers who previously worked at the research center?"

"That's right. These six workers are really smart."

"Once we start a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon in the U.S., we will need skilled workers. We will have to send them to U.S. for training. I was previously told that we would need about three skilled workers to send to U.S, so they can receive training from Lymondell Dyeon."

"I will select three young workers if you need them."

"I will let you know once things become clear."

"I'd like to talk about my job, sir."

"Sure, go ahead."

"Even after I retire at the end of this year, the research center has to be here. A company this large requires a research center. I understand you want to make a change; however, getting rid of the research center won't do any good for the company."

"What are you suggesting?"

"I suggest to bring a new chief officer for the research center and keep at least 15 workers there."

"We used to have 30 workers there."

"We essentially need 15 workers; that should be enough."

"Hmm..."

"I have someone I'd like to recommend for the chief officer position."

"Who is that?"

"I have a friend who also received a Ph.D. from Germany. He is young. He just became 51."

230 Acquiring a Storage Building in Suzhou Industrial Park 2 – PART 1

The chief officer of the research center recommended an engineer with his Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany as his successor at GH Mobile.

Gun-Ho wanted to know more about that person.

"Where is he working right now?"

"He is working in a research center in Pangyo City. It's a research center in a small company."

"Given the fact that you are recommending him as your successor, he must be very good and competent. Why is he working in a small company research center then?"

The chief officer let out a slight sigh.

"He received his Ph.D. in Munich. As you know, the German automobile industry produces the most competitive cars in the world, like Mercedes, BMW, Volkswagen... They are all German companies. After getting his Ph.D. degree, he started his career at the BMW research center. He was being paid a significant amount of salary."

"Then what happened?"

"He missed his home country, and he received a job offer from one of the Korean big auto companies—G Auto."

"He should be doing good there too."

"He was sort of bullied by other workers who were jealous of what he had achieved, and they were highly territorial too. Moreover, G Auto's company culture didn't suit him. So he moved to a small company's research center, and he

is currently working there; however, the work environment including necessary research equipment doesn't seem to fully support his research. He is now over 50, and it's not easy for him to move to another better company."

"Our company is probably no better than the one he is currently working for right now. And we don't pay much."

"He once came and visited me here and took a look around the research center. He said he couldn't compare it with the one in a big company, but it is certainly better than the one in Pangyo City, where he is working at."

"Hmm."

"He was a promising young man when he was at the Technical University of Munich in Germany. The diesel engine was invented by an engineer who studied at Munich, Germany. Munich is a city which is recognized for its highly developed automotive industry."

"Okay. Let's find out more about him then. Please have him send his resume to us."

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, I have something that I want to discuss with you, Mr. Chief Officer of the research center."

"Okay."

"Director Yoon is working on the demolition of our factory in Asan City. Once the joint venture business with Dyeon is confirmed, we will build a new factory there, and it will be used to process raw materials for urethane-related products."

"I had a rough idea about it."

"After you retire your current position at the end of this year, I'd like you to work at that factory in Asan City as a company advisor maybe for a year or so."

"Really? That sounds great."

The chief officer of the research center gave a bright smile.

Gun-Ho visited the factory in Asan City where the building was being torn down.

Director Yoon was supervising the construction site with his safety helmet on his head. The site was filled with dust.

"I am sorry, Director Yoon. I seemed to place you in a construction site all the time."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"It's my job, sir."

"You used to lead a large project in a construction site overseas, and I am sorry that I put you in a place where a small factory is being demolished."

"No problem. I feel so good when I think of building a marvelous factory at this very site after everything gets cleared out. People who are working on a construction site like me feel rewarded when we think of a new building that will be constructed."

"Right. We will have a new, highly advanced factory here for our joint venture business. Once you are done with the demolishing work, come back to the office in Jiksan Town."

"Yes, sir."

"Lymondell Dyeon will send their personnel here soon, and we will show them the land only."

"Oh, really?"

A food delivery truck arrived at the construction site; it was from a restaurant nearby.

"Oh, it's your lunchtime."

"Why don't you join us, sir?"

"Haha. I have a lunch appointment in Onyang City. Enjoy your lunch."

A 1-ton truck that was modified for a food delivery business was loaded with large plastic containers with food inside. They started unloading those plastic boxes.

Gun-Ho attended a meeting held for business owners, which was sponsored by Chungnam Province's business council committee. Since it only allowed business owners to attend—no vice president, no director, or anyone but business owners—there were only 7 people who attended the meeting. They were owners of small or medium-sized companies, and most of them had a loud voice and looked tough. They were at least 10 or 20 years older than Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, you don't play golf at all?"

"No, I don't often play it."

The business owners in the meeting talked about golf from the start of the meeting. They sometimes talked about female workers in their companies and their romantic relationship with those female employees.

Gun-Ho was wondering whether anyone here had ever been accused of sexual harassment.

There was a female business owner in her 50s at the meeting, and she left the meeting early saying that she had another appointment.

Those business owners also talked about how they kicked their workers' shin while they were reprimanding the workers.

Gun-Ho was thinking,

"They seem to be on a serious power trip."

Gun-Ho left the meeting after having his meal.

Gun-Ho was dozing off while taking a hot spring bath in Onyang City when he received a text message. It was written in English.

"Oppa, how have you been doing? Are you busy these days? You haven't talked

to me for a while."

It was from Mori Aikko.

Gun-Ho quickly replied to it,

"Are you in Tokyo right now?"

"Yes. I am in the condo in Daikanyama, Shibuya. I am off until this weekend."

"I will be busy all this week. I can go to Tokyo next week."

"I won't be in Tokyo next week. I have to go to Arashiyama Park, Kyoto for a photoshoot next week."

"Is it for a pictorial book?"

"Not really..."

They both took some time before continuing to talk. They sometimes took a long pause to refer to a dictionary through their smartphones when they saw an English word they could not understand.

"I have been invited by the professional photographer association of Kyoto for a photoshoot. More than 100 professional photographers will be there."

"You will probably wear Kimonos, right?"

"Right, I will have the photoshoot on Togetsu-kyo Bridge; I will be holding a Wa-ritsu (a traditional Japanese oil-paper umbrella)."

"You will be so pretty."

"Haha. Thank you, Oppa. Arigato Gozaimashita."

Gun-Ho pictured Mori Aikko in vibrant colored Kimonos with a traditional Japanese oil-Paper umbrella in her hand. She would look extremely gorgeous.

"The day after tomorrow is Saturday, right? I will be at the condo in Daikanyama, Shibuya on Saturday afternoon."

"I will be waiting for you."

In the afternoon that day, Gun-Ho went back to his office in Jiksan Town.

When Gun-Ho entered the company, the office staff stood up to greet him.

"Is everything fine here?"

"Yes, sir. Everything is going well as usual."

Gun-Ho entered his office and made a phone call to China to Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Did you make the second payment for the storage building that we are buying at the entrance of Suzhou Industrial Park? If I remember correctly, today is the payment day."

"Yes. I just made the second payment. President Goo, can we talk later? I am on my way to the Council of People's Commissars in this area."

231 Acquiring a Storage Building in Suzhou Industrial Park 2 – PART 2

"Council of People's Commissars? I believe it is something like a township office in Korea."

"That's right. A clerk there wants to see me."

"A clerk of Council of People's Commissars? Why would he want to see you?"

"I have no idea. I will give you a call after I meet with the clerk."

"Okay."

"Before you go, I have something to ask you about."

"What is it?"

"I am concerned about the storage building we purchased. The joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon hasn't been finalized yet, and we are not sure we will actually start the joint venture with them or not. However, we purchased storage for the business already."

"Don't worry about it. We will soon receive the confirmation for the joint venture. Otherwise, we can resell the storage."

"If we resell the storage, we will have to pay for fees and taxes."

"We will get the joint venture business from them. They said they would send their personnel to visit our factory. That means that they want to do a joint venture with us. Okay, I really have to go now. I will talk to you once I get back from the Council of People's Commissars."

"Sounds good."

Min-Hyeok called Gun-Ho when Gun-Ho was almost ready to call it a day.

"Did you meet with him? The clerk of Council of People's Commissars."

"Yes, I did. He is the head of the town and a party secretary at the same time. He looked like a farmer in the countryside though."

"A party secretary is a sort of powerful position. In China, any place that has an organization, there is a party secretary; it could be a party secretary of a small town, or province, or the state."

"It was about nothing important. He asked me why I want to transfer the land to our company's name, and he also wanted to know how much investment fund we are putting into the business."

"He is a silly man."

"He said that we might need two security guards for our new storage, and he wants to recommend two people he knows. He said he would send someone in the vicinity of the area."

"It seems that the Chinese government is very proactive in resolving an unemployment issue. Just do what you have to do, Min-Hyeok."

When Gun-Ho arrived at Haneda Airport in Tokyo, he sent a text message to Mori Aikko before heading to the condo in Daikanyama, Shibuya.

"Aikko, do not prepare dinner for us. Let's dine out."

Gun-Ho arrived at the condo where Mori Aikko was living in. Daikanyama was regarded as Cheongdam Town in Tokyo because there were so many sophisticated stores and restaurants. Mori Aikko's condo was located a bit off the main street.

When Gun-Ho arrived in front of the condo's front door, he entered the passcode to the keyless entry lock system. The passcode was Gun-Ho's phone number. That was what Mori Aikko set up.

"Aikko."

"Oppa!"

Aikko still looked like a teenager in Gun-Ho's eyes. She was like a cute rabbit.

"I missed you so much, Aikko."

"Me, too."

Gun-Ho bombarded Mori Aikko with his endless kisses on her cheek with a loud kissing sound.

"You haven't had dinner yet, right? Let's go out."

"We shouldn't just leave like this. Let's have at least a cup of tea here first."

Mori Aikko said in Korean.

"Your Korean improved a lot."

Gun-Ho sat at the dining table, and he heard a rattling sound from the kitchen. It seemed Mori Aikko was preparing a cup of tea in the kitchen. Gun-Ho felt like he was at home. He felt relaxed and cozy.

Aikko brought some tea with some snacks.

"What kind of tea is this?"

"It's Guro Mame tea."

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko took a walk on the Daikanyama street. While they were walking, Mori Aikko sometimes grabbed Gun-Ho's arm and jumped up and down in excitement.

"You are wearing the same clothes as the last time I saw you. I will buy you new clothes."

"No, it's okay. This is my favorite clothes."

"Let me buy one for you."

"Okay, then let's go to that store."

Mori Aikko was pointing the Green Field Outlet mall. It didn't cost Gun-Ho

much to buy her clothes. He bought pants and a jacket for Mori Aikko. Gun-Ho felt like he was buying cheap stuff for her, so he went to RedLabel and got a suit for her too.

"Don't waste your money."

Aikko told Gun-Ho that he shouldn't buy anything more, and she bought Gun-Ho a wallet and a handkerchief and told him that they were her gift to him.

Gun-Ho and Aikko had a good time while walking on a street and having a waffle and an ice cream.

After having a beer at an open-air café in Daikanyama, they walked back to the condo. Aikko's condo was located in a very expensive area, and an average Japanese person in Tokyo couldn't afford to buy it.

Aikko prepared Gun-Ho's toiletries and Yukata. The bedsheet was fresh and crispy.

Gun-Ho hugged Mori Aikko's waist tightly and kissed her.

The next morning, it was a bit chilly. Mori Aikko was in Gun-Ho's arms.

"Oppa, do you have to go back to Korea today? Can't you live here?"

"I have a business to run there."

"I do love the condo, but I sometimes feel it is too empty and quiet here."

Gun-Ho let out a slight sigh. He thought he would have to let her go someday.

"Oppa, I want to visit Korea."

"Korea?"

"Yeah. I want to walk on the street in Bukchon and also Insa Town. I want to see your company too."

"Sure. I welcome you to Korea at any time."

"Really?"

Mori Aikko put her arms around Gun-Ho's neck and pressed her lips against Gun-Ho's.

Gun-Ho came back to Korea after spending fantastic nights in Tokyo. He felt like he was recharged. When he went to work in the morning, he parked his car and walked to the front door. There, he bumped into Jong-Suk Park.

"Bro, you looked very good these days. I can tell by looking at your nose; it's shiny."

"My nose?"

Gun-Ho rubbed his nose with his right hand.

"The plant manager told me that you don't miss a class at Polytechnics College."

"Yeah. I didn't like to go to college at first, but now I like it."

"That's good to hear. Keep it up."

Jong-Suk Park walked towards his office in the production field. He was humming.

Gun-Ho then encountered the plant manager this time. He was on his way to his office after he parked his car.

"I am so glad to know that Manager Jong-Suk Park is doing well at Polytechnics College."

"He has his reason for it, sir."

"He has his own reason? What is it?"

"Oh, you don't know? He met someone there. He is dating a girl."

"A girl?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Yes, she is an office worker in another company and came to college to study. It

seems they hit it off well. Manager Jong-Suk Park goes straight to school after he gets off at work."

"Haha, really?"

Gun-Ho had never expected to hear Jong-Suk having a girl.

232 Lymondell Dyeon's visit 1 – PART 1

The chief officer of the research center entered Gun-Ho's office with a resume in his hand.

"Sir, I brought the resume of the person whom I recommended as my successor, earlier."

Gun-Ho reviewed the resume of the person who might be the next chief officer of Gun-Ho's company research center. His picture was attached to the resume. According to his resume, he graduated from Yonsei University majoring in Mechanics before he went to Germany to obtain his graduate degree and Ph.D.

"His hometown is Incheon City."

"Haha. Sir, you are from Incheon City too."

Gun-Ho closely looked at the resume.

"So he joined BMW research center right after he received his Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany. Additionally, he used to work for G Auto in Korea. His resume looks great."

"Sir, if you look at the bottom of the resume, he listed the development projects he participated in during his employment with BMW."

"Hmm."

"Most of all, he is still young so he will be able to assist you, sir, for a long time."

"I heard you, Mr. Chief Officer. Please tell him to come and visit us here when he has time. I need to see him in person first, don't I?"

"Of course, sir. I will let him know."

Gun-Ho usually read a book by himself in his office after he signed reports in the morning. He usually enjoyed reading books that were about business management; however, he also read books on various subjects to expand his knowledge, such as history, politics, society, philosophy, etc. Many people found themselves too busy in life to read a book, but Gun-Ho had time for book reading because he was the boss in the company. As he read more and more books during his spare time, he became clever and gained insight. He also expanded his knowledge simultaneously.

"I will travel overseas more and more often. Speaking English will come in very handy. Even though I speak Chinese as a second language, I will have to learn English too. I am able to at least communicate with Mori Aikko because I know English a bit."

Gun-Ho installed a TV in his office and frequently watched American soap opera and other TV programs in English, in an effort to improve his English.

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"Can you find an English instructor? I am thinking of beginning an English conversation class every morning for the management of our company. Once we start the joint venture with Dyeon, we will have to be able to speak English."

"I was actually going to make a suggestion about learning English. I will look for an English tutor right away."

Gun-Ho then asked for the accounting manager.

"Please get me a report on education and training expenses that we have spent for this year."

The accounting manager printed out the report from the accounting software and brought it to Gun-Ho as soon as possible.

"This is it? The only education and training expense is for the compulsory education? I only see the fire safety education, quality control education, sexual misconduct prevention education, Four Major Public Insurance education, and electrical safety education... These are the minimum that we have to provide for employees' training."

"That's right, sir."

"We will increase our education and training expenses by adding English training to it. If you find any necessary training in the accounting department on tax or anything else, make a request to the general affairs manager."

"Yes, sir. Thank you."

The general affairs manager came back to Gun-Ho's office around lunchtime.

"Umm, sir, I found an English tutor."

"Really? That's good."

"He is a native English speaker who is currently teaching English at Hoseo University. He will come to our company every morning for a one-hour English class."

"We will compensate him more than reasonable for his English teaching to our employees. Please place a posting right away, saying that we will start a daily English class in the morning. Also, send an official announcement to each department to let them know that the company will provide our employees with tuition assistance for work-related education from Polytechnics College or any other educational institution."

"Will do, sir."

Gun-Ho thought that he would attend the English class in the morning too himself.

After having lunch at the company cafeteria, Gun-Ho started dozing off in his office. After taking a brief nap, he watched a soap opera in English. While watching American TV drama, Gun-Ho thought of Jong-Suk Park.

Gun-Ho picked up the interphone and asked for Manager Jong-Suk Park.

When Manager Jong-Suk Park entered Gun-Ho's office, he was carrying safety work gloves in his hands. He probably took them off before he entered the office.

"Were you in the middle of work?"

"No. I just completed the work that I was working on."

"Please have a seat."

Jong-Suk Park sat at the conference table.

"You want some tea? Let's have a cup of coffee."

Gun-Ho asked his secretary via the interphone to bring two cups of coffee to his office.

Manager Jong-Suk Park seemed to be wondering why Gun-Ho wanted to talk with him.

The secretary brought coffee.

"Let's have coffee."

"Do you... have something that you want to tell me?"

"I heard rumors about you, Jong-Suk. A good one."

"What did you hear?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Jong-Suk Park's eyes widened while holding his cup.

"You are dating a girl, aren't you?"

Jong-Suk put his cup back to the table and scratched the back of his head as he laughed awkwardly.

"Who told you that?"

"Hey. I, as the president of this company, have to know everything that is going on here. If you have good news like that, you should have told me first."

"I thought it was too early to tell."

"I heard she is working at a company around here in Cheonan City. Is that right?"

"Yeah. She is working at an electronics company. She is working in their research center."

"If she is working in a research center, she must have a bachelor's degree. Why is she taking classes at Polytechnics College?"

"Right. She graduated from Hanseo University in Dangjin City. She didn't major in Engineering in college so her company let her take some engineering classes at Polytechnics College. Her company supports her educational tuition just like myself."

"I guess you will marry before I do."

"You have to marry before me, bro."

"I was born before you, but you don't have to wait for me to marry before you. If you found a decent girl, you marry first."

"We are not that serious yet. I haven't really talked about marriage with her."

"Does the girl like you too?"

"I think so."

"Then marry her, man. What are you waiting for?"

"I'm trying."

"How about her parents? Are they from here?"

"Yeah. Her father is a real estate agent, and her mom runs a hair shop. She is living in Jugong condo in Baekseok Town in Cheonan City."

"I'm so happy for you, Jong-Suk. When you have a chance, set up a meeting with her. I want to see her."

"Haha. Okay, bro."

Manager Jong-Suk Park smiled naively.

Lymondell Dyeon sent a message to GH Mobile that they would soon send their personnel to GH Mobile to conduct their due diligence. Gun-Ho immediately contacted Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Attorney Kim? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo. We just received a message from Lymondell Dyeon, they are sending their people here soon."

"When did they say they would arrive?"

"It's the 20th of this month. They will send three people including Vice President Brandon Burke."

"So, Mr. Brandon Burke is coming too, right? That's really nice. Moreover, they are coming to your factory in Jiksan Town, not the factory in Asan City. Since it is a new advanced factory, I'm sure that they will be impressed."

"Why don't you come here too?"

"I will go to Incheon International Airport on the first day to greet them and I will come to your factory in Jiksan Town on the last day of their visit."

"Why? Can't you come here every day during their visit?"

"I have other work to do. My presence during their investigation won't help anything since I have no knowledge about the field. Did you find an interpreter?"

"Not yet. I will find one."

233 Lymondell Dyeon's visit 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho was thinking of who he should ask for the interpreting work.

"Maybe I should ask President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media if she knows any good interpreter. She probably has good connections to people who can speak English fluently since she has given translation work to those people."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"Oh, President Gun-Ho Goo. This is Jeong-Sook Shin speaking."

"How are things going there?"

"Everything is fine. I sent you our profit and loss statement for this quarter via email already..."

"I'm not calling you for that. Do you have anyone you want to recommend for an interpretation job?"

"English interpretation?"

"Yes. There is a company in the U.S. called Lymondell Dyeon, and it's a multinational chemical company. I am trying to have a joint venture with them and I need an interpreter for three days."

"When do you need one?"

"They will send their personnel to us on the 20th of this month to Incheon International Airport. I will need an interpreter from that day for the following three days, so it will be in a total of four days if I include the days when they arrive and depart."

"I do know someone for the job. He is doing a translation job for us, usually for a business-related book. He used to work in the U.S. for a long time as a branch manager. He also studied in the U.S."

He started his translation work after he retired. You probably want him for the interpretation job for the work with Lymondell Dyeon, than getting a young English instructor in college for the same job."

"He used to work as a branch manager in the U.S.? That sounds very good. Can you send him to Incheon International Airport on the 20th of this month at 11 am? We will pick him up from there."

"Sure, I will let him know right away."

Gun-Ho let the managers and directors know that Lymondell Dyeon was sending their personnel to the company soon, during the meeting.

"They are finally coming."

"Mr. Plant Manager, please have the workers in the production field to clean up the machines and equipment."

"Yes, sir. I will also ask them to do some paint touch-ups on machines where its paint is peeled off."

"Also, please check the lab equipment as well."

"Yes, sir. We will check all the equipment in the research center, including the ones that we rarely use."

"Mr. Director Yoon, you said the demolition of the factory in Asan City is completed, right?"

"Yes, sir."

"It rained last week. Can you check the land if there are any holes or anything because of the rain? They will visit the land in Asan City."

"Yes, sir. I will have our workers to flatten the land with a roller."

Gun-Ho called for the general affairs manager after the meeting ended.

"We will have Lymondell Dyeon's personnel on 20th."

"I just heard it from the sales director, sir."

"I think you should go to Incheon International Airport that day to pick them up."

"No problem, sir."

"Our interpreter will be there too. Why don't you rent a van so you can take them all in one car? Please make sure that you get a new model and a clean one."

"Yes, sir."

"When you go to the airport to greet them, take Hee-Jeong Park with you. She will assist you."

"Okay, sir. Am I driving then?"

"Haha. No, you shouldn't. You should focus on Lymondell Dyeon's personnel. I will ask to send a chauffeur along with the rental car."

"What about I take the assistant manager of general affairs? He and I can drive in turn."

"Would the general affairs department be okay without you and the assistant manager?"

"It should be okay. They can give us a call if they need us, and we have the team leaders too."

"Okay then. The assistant manager and Hee-Jeong Park are good-looking people. They are appropriate to greet our guests."

"I look okay too, sir."

"Haha. Okay. You are dismissed."

"I will then find a nice rental van now."

The general affairs manager bowed to Gun-Ho before he left the office.

It was the day when people from Lymondell Dyeon arrived.

The general affairs manager of GH Mobile headed to Incheon International

Airport with the assistant manager and the secretary. Attorney Young-Jin Kim and the interpreter who used to work as a branch manager in the U.S. for a big company were in the waiting area.

"Attorney Kim, I think we have met at the building dedication ceremony."

"Right. You led the ceremony, didn't you? How is President Goo doing?"

"He is doing fine."

"I will have to leave the airport right after we meet with the people from Lymondell Dyeon. Once their investigation is completed, I will come to the factory in Jiksan Town on the last day. I already talked with President Goo about this."

"Oh, really?"

The general affairs manager looked at the man who looked like in his 50s with grey hair, who was standing next to Attorney Kim.

"Are you the interpreter, sir?"

"Yes, I am. President Jeong-Sook Shin from GH Media. GH Media then referred me to this job. I look forward to working with you for the next four days."

"We welcome you, sir. I am the general affairs manager of GH Mobile."

The general affairs manager gave his business card to the interpreter.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Travelers started coming out from the exit gate at the airport. There were many Americans among them. Attorney Kim waved his hand when he saw Vice President Brandon Burke of Lymondell Dyeon. Attorney Kim could easily recognize Mr. Brandon Burke.

The general affairs manager, assistant manager, Secretary Jeong-Hee Park, Mr. Brandon Burke and other people from Lymondell Dyeon exchanged their business cards with each other. The interpreter also introduced himself to them.

"It will take about two and a half hours from here to our factory in Jiksan Town, Incheon City. We were instructed by President Gun-Ho Goo to show you around Seoul City before coming to Jiksan Town. We will take you to Gyeongbokgung Palace and Namsan Tower."

"No."

Mr. Brandon Burke declined the offer.

"We will visit Seoul for a tour on the last day after our investigation is complete."

"If we return our factory without showing you around, we will get reprimanded by our president."

"Okay, then let's just have a brief drive around Seoul City before we head to Jiksan Town. This is my second visit in Seoul, but these two gentlemen have never been here."

The Starex van with everyone in it departed Incheon International Airport and headed to Seoul. They passed by Yeouido Island and arrived at Gwanghwamun Gate. Attorney Young-Jin Park got off the van and said,

"That is Gyeongbokgung Palace. Our king used to live there during the Joseon dynasty."

"Who is the statue?"

"He is Naval Commander Yi Sun-sin. He is a war hero during the war against Japan about 400 years ago."

One of the staff from Lymondell Dyeon was enthusiastically taking pictures.

The Starex van took a highway after taking a short trip to Teheran-ro in Gangnam. They arrived at Jiksan Town after 4 pm. There was a banner hanging at the factory entrance and it said 'Welcoming Lymondell Dyeon.'

When the people from Lymondell Dyeon arrived, the GH Mobile's managers and directors came out and greeted them.

"Vice President Brandon Burke, thank you for coming."

"Oh, President Gun-Ho Goo. Good to see you again."

They exchanged handshakes.

234 Lymondell Dyeon's Visit 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho greeted the person who came for the interpretation job.

The interpreter was surprised by the fact that Gun-Ho was a very young president. Gun-Ho's employees who were standing next to Gun-Ho including the plant manager and the chief officer of the research center were old men who would soon retire. However, Gun-Ho looked young about the same age as Kim Jong-un—Supreme Leader of North Korea.

"He must inherit the company from his father."

The interpreter just assumed it.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho extended his hand to the interpreter for a handshake and said,

"I've heard a lot about you from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media. I was told that you used to work in the U.S. as a branch manager of a big company and that you speak English fluently."

"Thank you. I've been working with President Jeong-Sook Shin for several years. I like your factory. It's humongous and beautiful at the same time."

Mr. Brandon Burke's party was having a tour of the production field at the factory in Jiksan Town, the plant manager was guiding them. Mr. Brandon Burke kept nodding his head while looking around the factory, he must be impressed by the extremely clean facility and shiny machines.

"The factory looked old in the picture, but it is actually very large and well organized."

The picture that Mr. Brandon Burke mentioned was the picture of the factory in

Asan City, which Gun-Ho submitted along with his application for a co-venturer opportunity to Lymondell Dyeon.

"It's getting late. Why don't you take a rest at the hotel for the rest of today and start your investigation tomorrow? We have reserved your room in Onyang Hot Spring Hotel and it's close to the factory. Our interpreter will stay in the same hotel."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho said to Mr. Brandon Burke,

"The city which we are in right now is a small city, so the hotel you will stay in is not big. However, this city of Onyang is famous for its hot springs. It is radium hot springs. You will enjoy the hot spring bath."

"Oh, hot spring?"

Mr. Brandon Burke seemed to be excited when he heard of the word 'hot spring.'

"Since this is your first day in Korea with us, we will throw a welcoming party for you. Our managers and directors will join us as well. We will also have an opportunity to get to know each other a bit."

Gun-Ho took Mr. Brandon Burke's party to Seungjiwon; it is a Korean traditional full course meal restaurant which was located in Baekseok Town, Cheonan City. Seungjiwon was still in business now.

The internal auditor, the plant manager, the chief officer of the research center, and Director Yoon attended the party. The sales manager couldn't join them because one of his family members passed away and he left for home early that day. There were 12 people at the party, including three personnel from Lymondell Dyeon and a few staff from the general affairs department of GH Mobile.

Mr. Brandon Burke looked around the restaurant with a smile.

A Korean traditional full course meal came out as ordered. Mr. Brandon Burke carefully tasted the food and shouted, "Good."

Lymondell Dyeon's examiners' investigation started; it was extremely thorough and they were meticulous. They walked around the factory with a checklist in their hands.

They checked the efficiency and effectiveness of the machines and the production rate per second. They also retrieved data of labor costs and the number of units produced per person. They calculated the depreciation cost of the new extruding machines which were made in Germany. They reviewed the maintenance record of the equipment in the factory. They even checked the date of wastewater disposal and pointed out that it was overdue. The plant manager and Manager Jong-Suk Park were sweating while walking around in the factory with them.

"Who is in charge for this production line?"

"I am. I am the team leader of the production department."

"Which company made the mold that this extruding machine is using for these products?"

"I don't know. I'm sure our plant manager can answer your question."

"What would you do when the plant manager is not present in the factory?"

"Well..."

"You just lost one point."

Another examiner asked for Manager Jong-Suk Park.

"I've noticed that the internal audit was conducted for the ISO140001 management system and the audit report indicated that there was a problem in the system. This is your signature on the report, isn't it, Manager Jong-Suk Park?"

"That's right."

"Please show me how you corrected the problem."

"That... umm..."

"You lost one point."

Most workers in the factory were sweating and feeling depressed while the investigation of Lymondell Dyeon was being performed, as it didn't seem to be going well.

"How much is the electricity cost per KW?"

"How much is the water cost per 1 liter?"

"These fire extinguishers haven't been charged for too long."

The Lymondell Dyeon's investigators overwhelmed even the electrical safety manager and the fire-fighting system manager.

Gun-Ho smiled when he received the interim report about the investigation.

"It is good to have this kind of investigation once in a while. It would awaken my workers to the realization that they have to be more careful and thorough in their work."

The investigators conducted their examination not only on the production field but also on the office area as well. They checked every single department in the company. They checked the accounting department, the general affairs department, the planning department, the sales department and the research center as well. They even came to Gun-Ho's office and checked the management system.

When they entered Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho showed them the picture of the vacant lot in Asan City. The picture was taken after the factory in Asan was completely demolished.

"If it is decided that we will have a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, we are going to build a factory on the land in Asan City, as shown in the picture. The new factory will be large and advanced just like the factory here in Jiksan Town."

The land on the picture looked neat. The land was already flattened with a roller. Director Yoon planted small red flags to mark the borderline.

"Let me tell you why this land's location is ideal for a factory. First, it is located in the center of our country, so it is an optimum location to get various raw materials and chemicals necessary for a compound. Secondly, it is close to big cities such as Asan City and Cheonan City, so it's easy to find quality labor force constantly. There are several colleges nearby as well."

Mr. Brandon Burke nodded his head as he listened to Gun-Ho's explanation.

"Thirdly, there is Pyeongtaek Port International Passenger Terminal, not far from here. It is geographically close to China and it is in a perfect location to be used as a forward operating base to export products to the countries in East Asia."

"Did you say there is a port nearby? How long does it take to get there from here?"

"It will take only 20 minutes."

"What? 20 minutes? That's it?"

Gun-Ho drove Mr. Brandon Burke's party to the Pyeongtaek Port International Passenger Terminal.

"If you go up to that lookout point over there, you can get the best view of the entire port. It is called Marine Center."

Gun-Ho walked up to the Marine Center with Mr. Brandon Burke's party. It was a clear day, and they could see the entire port sharply. They also could see a great many exporting vehicles being loaded to a large ship.

"Do you see the cars over there? A significant number of vehicles are being exported world-wide through this port. If Lymondell Dyeon does a joint venture with GH Mobile, our products will be exported to China and other countries in East Asia via this port."

235 Lymondell Dyeon's Visit 2 – PART 2

Mr. Brandon Burke had other personnel to take an English version pamphlet about Pyeongtaek Port International Passenger Terminal, and take several pictures of the port himself.

Gun-Ho continued to talk to Mr. Brandon Burke.

"I understand that you have found several issues during the investigation of our factory; however, those issues can easily be corrected and we will correct them gradually. But it's not easy to find a factory that is located 20 minutes from an international port like this. If we start a joint venture together in this location, both of Lymondell Dyeon and GH Mobile will achieve what they want. It will be a win-win situation for both companies."

"You said you have the appraisal report on the land, right?"

"Yes, it was appraised by Korea Appraisal Board. I will give you a translated version of the appraisal report. In addition, I will give you the pictures and floor plan of the storage in Suzhou Industrial Park in China."

On the final day of the Lymondell Dyeon's investigation, Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim & Jeong Law Firm came to Gun-Ho's factory in Jiksan Town. Attorney Kim asked Mr. Brandon Burke with a broad smile.

"Has your investigation completed? How was it? The factory's location is excellent and President Goo is loaded with funds. They have quality workers with advanced technology. You wouldn't be able to find a better partner than this. Why don't you make a letter of intent before you leave today?"

Mr. Brandon Burke smiled.

"A letter of intent? It's too early to do that."

Gun-Ho added,

"A letter of intent is just a letter to show our intention to do business together. It's not a contract. It will serve though as deterrence, so other companies can't try to compete now to be a partner for this specific matter. You and I, we both have the authority to make a decision on the joint venture matter. We can do it if we want."

"Well, it is still too early for it."

"Let's have lunch first and make a letter of intent before you leave for Seoul at 3 pm. I will ask the press to join us."

"Let us have some time to discuss."

Gun-Ho showed Mr. Brandon Burke's party a small meeting room, so they can discuss comfortably in private.

After heated discussion among them, Mr. Brandon Burke's party walked out of the meeting room. Attorney Young-Jin Kim approached them with a smile.

"Have you made a decision?"

"Well... We haven't yet..."

"It shouldn't take that long."

"Egnopak also showed their interest in doing the joint venture with us, and we need to compare the pros and cons of two companies..."

Gun-Ho said,

"I understand that Egnopak is an attractive company which is located in Jinwi Town. They have more than 3,000 employees and it is a KOSDAQ registered firm. I believe they have more than 100 workers in their research center alone. However, they don't have what we have. Also, they want the joint venture to be 51:49."

"That's true."

"A joint venture must start equally between co-venturers, that's what I believe. When they demanded 51:49, they were saying that they want to control the joint

venture without being interrupted by Lymondell Dyeon. To be honest with you, Mr. Brandon Burke, I have more funds than the president of Egnopak."

Mr. Brandon Burke was thinking while rubbing his chin.

Attorney Young-Jin Kim pushed him a little bit.

"Let's sign a letter of intent. If we do it, Egnopak will give up."

The interpreter added to it,

"I used to work for M Mobis and I retired from that company. I also once worked in New York as their branch manager. And we had a chance to work with the Egnopak's president at that time, and I remember that the president had a very bad disposition. I was told that his family was on a serious power trip against the employees of Egnopak. There was also a rumor about his sexual harassment."

"Sexual misconduct?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Mr. Brandon Burke frowned.

At that moment, Attorney Young-Jin Kim asked Gun-Ho with a loud voice,

"President Goo, how much funds are you planning to invest in the joint venture?"

"Authorized capital of 20,000,000 dollars!"

Mr. Brandon Burke jumped up from his seat.

"Let's do it!"

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"Ask journalists to come and join us when we sign a letter of intent. Call the newspaper in the area and the three major newspapers: Chosun, Joongang, and Donga Ilbo. Also, call the branch manager of the economic newspaper in

Cheonan City. Tell them GH Mobile in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City will sign a letter of intent to start a joint venture with the multinational company—Lymondell Dyeon at 3 pm today."

"Yes, sir. But I think we need to give them some token of gratitude if they come."

"Give them transportation expenses. We will show them our respect that way."

"Yes, sir. I will contact them right away."

Gun-Ho drafted a letter of intent and let the interpreter translate it into English. The interpreter seemed to have drafted this kind of papers when he previously worked for a big company, it didn't take him even 10 minutes to finish the translation. Gun-Ho handed it over to his secretary to type.

At 3 pm, a journalist from a local newspaper and a branch manager of a newspaper publisher arrived. Gun-Ho asked the general affairs manager to prepare a camera.

Gun-Ho showed the English version of the letter of intent to Mr. Brandon Burke. Mr. Burke grinned as he reviewed the draft of the letter.

"We can make changes if we want at any time."

Gun-Ho and Mr. Brandon Burke signed on the letter of intent. In order to make it formal, Gun-Ho asked GH Mobile's directors and managers to stand behind along with the other two personnel from Lymondell Dyeon. The journalist from a local newspaper took pictures, and the general affairs manager of GH Mobile took pictures too. The branch manager of the daily newspaper didn't bring a camera; he just asked the general affairs manager to send the pictures to him and gave his phone number.

Gun-Ho sent out the picture to every single newspaper publisher in Korea via fax.

The following day, an economic newspaper and a daily newspaper talked about GH Mobile's possible joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon. They said that GH Mobile located in Cheonan City would build a chemical factory in Asan City, Chungnam province with the multinational company—Lymondell Dyeon. Even

though Gun-Ho didn't even start building a factory in Asan City yet, the newspapers put a picture of GH Mobile's factory in Jiksan Town and made it sound like it was the joint venture factory in Asan City.

The president of Egnopak read the newspaper and he became furious.

"What is GH Mobile? Who is the f*cking President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile?"

The Egnopak's president threw a cup of water against his office wall and screamed in outrage.

"That f*cking Lymondell Dyeon made us believe that they would do a joint venture with us and then they signed the letter of intent with another company. That son of bi*ch. I won't let it go easily. The company's name is GH Mobile. I will remember the name."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

Please take Mr. Brandon Burke's party to Seoul safely. Let them stay in Ritz Carlton Hotel in Gangnam, Seoul City and give them a tour in Seoul tomorrow. You can show them Gyeongbokgung Palace and Namsan Tower. Have lunch in a decent restaurant too. They are scheduled to fly to the U.S. in the evening tomorrow, so they should have plenty of time to have a tour. Ask the accounting manager for a company credit card. I will call her and ask her to prepare the credit card for you."

"Yes, sir."

236 Egnopak's President is Furious 1

– PART 1

The daily temperature range became great. People started wearing long sleeve shirts.

GH Mobile's employees were now wearing a new uniform that was made for spring and autumn. The refreshing uniform was newly designed by GH Media's design team leader—Ms. Min-Sook Oh.

Find authorized novels in Webnovel faster updates, better experience Please click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

GH Mobile's company culture was gradually changing. The change was not planned by anyone, but it was made by GH Mobile's workers themselves. They were working in an environmentally friendly and newly constructed factory in a new uniform. More and more workers voluntarily attended the English class every morning. It was all part of the recent changes at the factory.

Korean Thanksgiving Day came around the corner.

The general affairs manager came to Gun-Ho's office with pamphlets of shopping stores such as E-Mart and NH Market. These pamphlets were introducing various gift options for Korean Thanksgiving Day.

"It is time to decide our Thanksgiving Day gifts for our workers. When the company was Mulpasaneop, we always gave gifts to our employees every year, so I think we'd better keep the same practice this year too."

"What was the budget of a gift per worker during the Mulpasaneop days?"

"We usually gave a gift worth 30,000 won."

"What sorts of gifts did they select?"

"A gift was determined during the joint meeting of staff and team leaders from

each department. They usually selected a box of tuna cans or a box of sesame oils or kitchen utensils."

"Since our company is doing better and better, let's select a gift with a value of 60,000 won, twice more than what they used to receive when they worked for Mulpasaneop. They can choose gifts during a joint meeting as they have done so far."

"Thank you, sir."

The general affairs manager smiled broadly before he left Gun-Ho's office.

Gun-Ho asked for the internal auditor.

"The creditors have been quiet lately. I guess that's because the order of priority to repay our debt to creditors became clear because of you, Mr. Internal Auditor."

"We started with paying off small debt first. As for the creditors with a large amount of our debt, we convinced them to wait for full repayment as we still do business with them."

"Good job, Mr. Internal Auditor."

"There are no more unpaid wages. The creditors for their wages have already dropped the seizure against our company's assets."

"So we just need to focus on our work now."

"Yes, sir. Some of our customers that are usually big companies sometimes request our trial balance that shows accounts receivable or accounts payable. Now, we can proudly show them our trial balance without hesitation."

"I feel so confident by having you on my side."

"Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho's secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park—passed on a message to Gun-Ho through the interphone,

"Sir, I have a call on hold for you. It's from Egnopak's secretary's office. They want to talk to you, sir."

"Egnopak? What do they want to talk to me about?"

Gun-Ho picked up the phone. A lady was on the other line. She then said with a nice voice, "Our president is on the phone. He'd like to talk with you, sir."

Then, Gun-Ho heard a man's deep voice.

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, this is he."

"You once came to my company, right? With President Richard Amiel—Dyeon Japan's president."

"That's correct. I visited you once before."

"So you came to spy on me that time, huh? So you are actually running an auto parts company called GH Mobile, huh? But you said you were doing rental property business, didn't you? And you gave me your business card that said GH Development."

"That's correct."

"So you made me put my guard down by telling me that you were just a rental property businessman, and you fooled me. You knew I was talking with Lymondell Dyeon to do a joint venture with them! You stole information from me and fooled me behind my back?!"

"Please lower your voice. That was before I acquired GH Mobile."

"I don't f*cking care! Shame on you. Don't call yourself a businessman, you crook! GH Mobile must be a tiny company. I will see how much longer your GH Development would last. I can make it close its business. You arrogant jerk!"

The president of Egnopak was furious and yelled at Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho remembered his toad-like face.

"You are crossing the line, sir."

"What line? Who do you think you are? How old are you?"

Gun-Ho knew the nature of the presidents or the business owners who were born into a wealthy family. Gun-Ho had met a lot of those people on various occasions like a meeting or a gathering after he became a business owner himself. They were condescending and arrogant, and they thought they were better than anyone. The ones who had inherited their company rather than building it themselves tend to have a horrible attitude. Workers tend to accept and endure the abuse toward them made by their employers whether it was verbal or even physical abuse. Many of them acted as if they were a king, and many of them were immature and far from decent.

Many business owners and company presidents were surprisingly bad people; they were mean but weak. They were susceptible to stress and vulnerable in general. They were arrogant and cruel with the weak, and they were nice and modest with the strong. The president of Egnopak was born into an affluent family, and he inherited his company from his father. Gun-Ho thought that he had to make sure that Egnopak's president wouldn't see him as a weak person, so he firmly said in a low voice.

"Sir, are you ill?"

"What? What did you say?"

"If you want to keep your company in the current size, you'd better maintain your calmness. You could lose your entire company with nothing left to pass on to your next generation."

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"I used to work at a factory as a factory worker, and I came this far without anyone's help. I have lived a tough life, and you don't want to mess with me. So, just be quiet and stay calm for your own good, and you'd better not provoke me."

And then, Gun-Ho hung up the phone.

"Crazy son of a b*tch! He is on a serious power trip, and he thinks it will work on me."

Gun-Ho smiled. He realized that he had changed a lot.

"I used to feel extremely envious of the workers of Egnopak when I saw the company's job posting on Job Korea a few years back. I wondered what kind of people would get a position in that big company. The qualification that Egnopak required to get a job there was unbelievably high. Their competition rate was 100:1. It is a KOSDAQ registered company, and I just had a big fight with its owner president. Now, I am in that sort of level. Hahaha."

It was Korean Thanksgiving Day.

Gun-Ho headed to his home where his parents were living in with his sister's family while carrying Korean Ginseng Corporation's ginseng and a bundle of dried yellow corvine. Gun-Ho's niece—Jeong-Ah—grew tall while her parents seemed to shrink in height. Gun-Ho could see more wrinkles in their faces. They were having a comfortable life because of Gun-Ho's help, but they couldn't stop their aging process. After the memorial service, Gun-Ho's family sat at a table altogether.

237 Egnopak's President is Furious 1

– PART 2

Gun-Ho's brother-in-law asked Gun-Ho.

"I read it from a newspaper not long ago that GH Mobile and an American company will start a joint venture soon, and they will build a new chemical factory. So are you building the factory now?"

"We just signed a letter of intent, and we haven't made an actual contract yet."

"Doesn't that company need a transportation service for their products?"

"We haven't gone that far yet."

"If they need the service, I can do it."

Gun-Ho's sister who was sitting next to her husband told her husband, "We have received so much help from Gun-Ho already. Don't ask him more."

"I was just reminding him that he has an option to give that job to me since I am in that business. I didn't say that he had to give me the job."

"Gun-Ho doesn't involve the family in his business. We might not be very helpful for his business, but we shouldn't at least be an obstruction to him when he runs his business."

"That... that's true."

Gun-Ho's mother asked Gun-Ho while she was having a soup, "What did you say GH stands for?"

"It's my name initials in English. I told you that last time, mom."

"Why don't you name it like Gun-Ho Business or Gun-Ho Industry or something like that? It's easier to remember the company name that way. GH is hard to remember."

Gun-Ho's sister explained to her mother.

"It's a trend, mom. A company should have an English name, especially if they do business with other countries like exporting or trading goods. If we name a company like Gun-Ho Business or Gun-Ho Industry, people from other countries wouldn't remember the name of his company. It's outdated too."

Gun-Ho's father filled Gun-Ho's glass with liquor.

"Have a glass of liquor, son. You, my son-in-law, drink liquor too."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho and his brother-in-law responded simultaneously.

Gun-Ho drank a glass of Cheongju*.

"How come my aunt didn't come today? We would have more fun together if she was here."

Gun-Ho's sister answered Gun-Ho's wondering.

"She is not in a situation where she can visit us to spend Korean Thanksgiving Day together. She is having a serious problem with her daughter-in-law. I heard she even got into a physical altercation with her daughter-in-law last time. Her son—Jae-Woong—must have had a hard time being squeezed between those two women."

"Jae-Woong is doing well at his work, right?"

"He was born to be a government worker, I guess. He is so indecisive on everything. He should pick a side either his mom's side or his wife's side and be firm. Those two women kept fighting all the time because Jae-Woong doesn't do anything."

Gun-Ho's father talked quietly.

"Your aunt and her daughter-in-law are tough and stubborn. Well, your mom is too."

"What did you just say?"

When Gun-Ho's mother raised her voice, his father went into his room quietly.

A few days after the Korean Thanksgiving Day, the chief officer of the research center brought a man, who looked like he was in his early 50s, to the company.

The man was wearing a gold metal frame glasses, and he looked pale. He looked like a typical intellectual.

The research center's chief officer asked Gun-Ho's secretary, "Is President Goo in the office?"

"Yes, he is. He is watching an American soap opera."

The chief officer of the research center entered Gun-Ho's office and introduced the man to him.

"Sir, this is the person whom I talked to you about. He is the man with a Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany."

"A pleasure to meet you, sir. I am Won-Il Lee."

Gun-Ho stood up and offered his hand to the man for a handshake.

"Very nice to meet you. I am Gun-Ho Goo. I've heard a lot about you from our research center's chief officer."

"Thank you."

"Our research chief officer strongly recommended you as his successor for our research center. I've looked at your resume."

"Thank you, sir."

"I just had to see you in person before I decide to hire you, so I asked our research chief officer to bring you to our company."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Of course, sir."

"Please have a seat."

Gun-Ho asked a few questions to this Won-Il Lee person, just to verify if he understood things correctly that were written on his resume.

"As we move to this new location, we reallocated some of the research center workers to other departments."

"I am aware of that."

"If you join our company, you will have to hire new workers for the research center."

"Yes, sir."

"As you can see, we are not a big company. Our research equipment might not be enough."

"I've looked around the research center earlier. It actually looks better than when the company was still Mulpasaneop. I've already verified that some of the equipments are still here. Also, I've noticed that the workers in the research center handle the research equipment better than before."

"We still have time until our current chief officer of the research center retires; he will retire at the end of this year. We will review your file and will let you know our decision."

"Yes, sir."

The interviewee and the chief officer of the research center left the office, and after a while, the research chief officer came back to Gun-Ho's office.

"What do you think of him, sir?"

"He looks decent, and he looks honest too."

"I am not saying this because I recommended him to you, but he is a really smart man, and he is the right person for our research center. He is really passionate

about his research, and I highly evaluate his performance in the research center. He is different from people like me who is old."

"What sort of performance are you talking about?"

"He has several patents from BMW, G Auto, and the research center in Pangyo City where he is currently working at."

"Are those patents commercialized?"

"He has one or two patents that were commercialized. He also made a presentation about his research outcome at the Korea Institute for Advancement of Technology. He is a promising researcher, but the research center he is currently working for can't fully support him."

"I heard what you said, Mr. Chief Officer. I will review his file favorably since you recommended him."

"If he joins our company, he won't come by himself, but he probably will come with two or three other researchers. Research is a teamwork, so he probably has his own team."

"Hmm."

"So, if they come, I think we need to provide them a OneRoomTel or something."

"I will take that into account."

Gun-Ho received an email from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

It was an annual sales report. The books that GH Media published so far were Professor Jien Wang's book—Economy Prospect in China for the 21st Century, and three Japanese books about self-development, and one American business management book.

[The first edition of Professor Jien Wang's book is sold out; there were 1,500 of them. We will print more of them. However, given the current sales speed, we won't print more than its second edition.

Two of the three Japanese books haven't sold much, so we won't print more, but one Japanese book—The person who wakes up in the morning's first and second edition—is sold out. We are printing its third edition. It could possibly be our best-selling book. Our current balance in the company account is 190 million won.]

"Hmmm. So she is saying that Professor Jien Wang's book and the American business management book didn't generate profits, but we didn't lose money by publishing those books either. Two Japanese books incurred a loss, and one Japanese book is making profits. The publishing business is indeed a risky business. It is a business venture."

Note*

Cheongju – a clear and refined rice wine.

238 Egnopak's President is Furious 2

– PART 1

Gun-Ho asked for Director Yoon who supervised the demolition of the factory in Asan City.

"Let's get the new factory started being built. Do you happen to know an architect who is working in the U.S.? We need to make a request to build our new factory."

"I do know a few people in the field. A friend of mine who is junior to me is working in LA. Or, we can ask the architectural design company which I had previously worked with."

"Then ask the person who is currently working in the U.S."

"There are a lot of good architects in Korea too, who would do a great job of building our factory."

"No, we need a person who is working in the U.S., and before they start designing the factory, they will have to visit Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle."

"Lymondell Dyeon is the company that sent their personnel to investigate our factory last time, right?"

"Usually, big companies allow the public to have a tour of their factories. I want the architects who will build our factory to take a close look at Lymondell Dyeon's factory in Seattle first and use their factory as the benchmark for designing our new factory. They will have to pay attention to Lymondell Dyeon's factory's production line's length and width."

"I understood what you meant, sir. I will contact the person in LA."

"However, you will have to handle all the necessary things in Korea, such as getting approval from the government to build our factory."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Of course. I will handle them, sir."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Chairman Lee in Cheongdam Town.

"Sir, it's me Gun-Ho Goo."

"Hey, President Goo. I heard you are doing very well with your business these days."

"Did Master Park already leave for his hometown—Goesan Town?"

"Yes, he did. He has been staying in his temple-like home and spending most of his time reading books."

"Haha, is that so?"

"Even though he is in Goesan Town and is far away from Gangnam, Seoul, the middle-aged ladies from Gangnam come all the way to his home to bother him. These days, it doesn't take long to travel from Seoul to Goesan, and Master Park can't hide himself anywhere these days."

"Haha, I see."

"What made you call me today, President Goo?"

"I'd like to meet with President Park—the owner of the RiverStar building in Sinsa Town."

"You want to meet with President Park?"

"Yes, sir."

"You really want to buy that building?"

"If President Park is willing to sell his building, I do want to acquire that building, sir."

"How come you are so obsessed with that building? It is not generating much

profit."

"I need a place to sit on when I go back to Seoul."

"Hahahaha."

"Why are you laughing, sir?"

"You sound just like me when I was at your age!"

"Really?"

"You are planning to put someone else in charge of the factories in Asan City and Jiksan Town, right?"

"I can't hide anything from you, sir. I am not sure how it will turn out, but that's my current intention."

"Okay. I will introduce you to President Park, but you will have to keep in mind that he is a very experienced and cunning old man. You have to be careful when you deal with him."

"Thank you, sir."

It was getting chilly.

October passed by and November came around. Frost started forming on a car windshield in the morning.

Director Yoon entered Gun-Ho's office to give a report.

"I talked to my architect friend in LA. He is willing to work on a design drawing for our new factory in Asan City."

"Did he already visit Lymondell Dyeon's factory in Seattle?"

"He did. He said he studied every corner of their factory. He even found the architectural design company which designed their factory in Seattle and consulted them."

"Really?"

"He is coming to visit our factory next week."

"When he comes here, please give him a thorough tour of our factory."

"If we request a building design to a company or a person overseas, we need a formal request in writing with your signature on it. We will also need a translated document that is notarized, such as the company registration."

"Okay."

A moment after Director Yoon left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho received a phone call from Chairman Lee.

"President Goo, you asked me the other day that you want to meet with President Park who owns the RiverStar building, right?"

"Yes, I did."

"I forgot about it for the past few days, and I just talked with him today."

"What did you tell him?"

"I told him that there is a young man who's going to eat him alive."

"Huh?"

"Guess what he said."

"What did he say?"

"He said that he is aware that he had reached the age to be eaten alive. He used to be an energetic and tough guy, but I guess he is getting old now."

"I thank you for everything, sir. When can I meet him then?"

"Why don't you go see him tomorrow? We never know if he would still be alive after a few days."

"Haha. Don't say that, sir. I will visit him tomorrow then."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to the branch manager of the stockbroking company.

"I will need to withdraw some of my funds."

"How much are you planning to withdraw?"

"About 40 billion won."

"What? Did you say 40 billion won?"

"Yes. I will transfer the funds to a bank in Gangnam tomorrow. Please get the funds ready by then for me."

"I was actually going to meet with you soon, sir. I have a very good investment product you might be interested in."

"The funds will be used to acquire real estate. I just wanted to give you a heads up since it is a significant amount of money, and you might need time to prepare the amount."

"President Goo, please help me out with my business too."

"I will help you out next time, Mr. Branch Manager."

Gun-Ho dialed the phone number that Chairman Lee gave to him.

A lady picked up the phone; she must be President Park's secretary. She didn't sound like a young lady though.

"May I talk to President Park, please?"

"May I tell him who is calling?"

"My name is Gun-Ho Goo. I am the president of GH Mobile in Cheonan City, Chungnam Province."

"Please hold."

After a while, an old man who had a clear and high-pitched voice picked up the phone.

"Who do you want to talk with?"

"I am President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile."

"Oh, you are the person whom Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town talked to me about."

"That's right. I'd like to visit your office tomorrow if that's okay with you?"

"Can you come by after 2 pm? I have an appointment with a Korean traditional medicine doctor in the morning to get acupuncture."

"Sure, sir. I will be there after 2 pm tomorrow."

"Do you know where I am located?"

"I know where it is, sir."

"Come up to the 18th floor tomorrow. You will see an office with a sign, 'Haseong Company.'"

"Yes, sir. I will see you tomorrow then."

After getting off the phone with President Park—the owner of the RiverStar building—Gun-Ho thought about the conversation that he just had with President Park.

"Haseong Company? Haseong means river star if it's written in Chinese character, right?"

239 Egnopak's President is Furious 2

– PART 2

The next day, Gun-Ho headed out for Sinsa Town in Seoul from his office in Jiksan Town to meet with President Park who was the owner of the RiverStar building. It was a simple drive to get there from his office. He just needed to take a highway from North Cheonan IC all the way to Sinsa Town.

"There might be heavy traffic from Yangjae Town to Banpo IC. I'd better leave early."

Gun-Ho had his lunch on the way to Sinsa Town at the rest area; he had Udong.

Gun-Ho arrived at the RiverStar building. He entered the building, and he was looking at the building directory board when a security guard approached Gun-Ho.

"Which company are you visiting?"

"I am here to meet with President Park of Haseong Company."

The security guard seemed to be frightened when he heard of the name President Park, and he said,

"You will have to go up to the 18th floor."

He even pushed the elevator button and let Gun-Ho get into the elevator.

Gun-Ho didn't see any workers inside the Haseong Company's office except a secretary lady who looked like in her 50s. The building management office was probably located somewhere else. The secretary stood up from her desk chair when she saw Gun-Ho entering the office.

"I am here to see President Park."

"Umm, are you President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile?"

"Yes, I am."

"Please come with me."

The secretary led Gun-Ho to the president's office. The office was unexpectedly large. Its floor was covered with a grey carpet. There was a frame hanging on the wall, and it said something in Chinese character. Also, an enormous taxidermied turtle was attached to the wall.

"I am Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile."

Gun-Ho gave the old man a 90-degree bow respectfully.

President Park didn't even bother standing up to greet Gun-Ho. He just pointed to an empty seat on a sofa while sitting on the other side of the sofa.

"Have you reviewed the real estate registration of this building?"

"Yes, I have, both for the land and the building."

"This building is located in the center of a commercial area; however, the government didn't apply 90% maximum Building Coverage Ratio to this building, so it is spacious."

"I haven't fully checked the entire building yet, but I have noticed that the emergency exit and the basement look old."

"Those things can easily be fixed. Do you have enough funds to acquire the building? I do trust Chairman Lee, but you look so young. So I have to make sure that you have funds to buy the building."

"Don't worry about it."

"How do you know Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town? Are you a friend of his son?"

"I met him at a fishing site. I've known him for five years now. He is one of the people I admire greatly."

"You admire him? You know that he used to work as a hard money lender, right?"

He is not someone who should be admired. He was the worst person among the worst. He seemed to be a better person now since he is old."

The lady who was sitting outside the president's office entered the room with green tea.

President Park said to her,

"Manager Kim, please bring me the report on last month's rental revenue and last year's balance sheet."

"Yes, sir."

After the lady left the office, Gun-Ho asked President Park,

"I thought she was a secretary. Is she in charge of accounting here?"

"She does both. She has been working for my company—Haseong Company—for over 30 years now. She joined us right after she graduated from a commercial high school."

"Did you say 30 years? Wow."

When he heard of 30 years, Gun-Ho thought the turtle that was attached to the wall might have lived that long. The lady came back to the office with the documents that President Park asked.

"As you see in this chart, the monthly rental income is about 900 million won."

"What about its vacancy rate?"

President Park didn't answer Gun-Ho's question; instead, he asked for someone via the interphone.

"Director Yoo? Please come to my office."

After a moment, a man who looked like he was in his late 50s entered the office. Gun-Ho was not sure where this man came from because he didn't really see anyone in the company except the lady at the front desk.

"What's our vacancy rate?"

"You can safely assume that it is zero since we are in the center of Gangnam."

President Park turned his head and looked at Gun-Ho and smiled.

"Did you hear that?"

When the Director Yoon person didn't leave the office but wondered if he could leave or if he had to stay, President Park gestured for him to leave the office.

"How much total debt does this company have?"

"It's 60% of the appraised value."

"What was the appraised value?"

"It was 230 billion won including the land and the building altogether."

"When did you get the appraisal?"

"It was issued last year by Korea Appraisal Board."

"Can I have a copy of the appraisal?"

"I knew you would ask for it. I've already prepared a copy for you."

"So, both of the land and the building were appraised at the time, right?"

"Of course. Take a good look at the appraisal and analyze it; you will find all the information you need in that paper."

The appraisal contained pictures of the building's exterior, entrance, and basement parking lot, etc."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"You are paying more than 400 million won per month for just the loan interest by keeping this building."

"Unbelievable."

"I'm sorry?"

"Your capacity for mental computation is incredible. Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town was right."

"What are you talking about?"

"He told me that a young man who would eat me alive would come to see me."

After President Park's strange statement, there was an awkward silence that filled the air for a while.

Gun-Ho continued to talk while sipping his cup of green tea.

"You are making 900 million won by leasing the offices in this building, and you pay 400 million won for your loan interest out of the 900 million won. You also have to pay for expenses like labor and other costs. You will also have to consider the depreciation cost of the building. Are you getting enough income from this building?"

"I am still alive, aren't I?"

"How much do you want to sell it for?"

"Well, I need to know first who is buying it. Is it an individual or a business entity that is purchasing my building?"

"A company will purchase it."

"Then, I will have to receive 90% of the building's appraised value."

"So, you want to sell the building for 207 billion won."

"I still can't believe you calculated that without a calculator. You are more than qualified to be Chairman Lee's apprentice."

"Pardon me?"

"Never mind. I'm just talking to myself. Go on."

"What is the total security deposit?"

"I believe it's about 40 billion won."

President Park was about to call for someone to get the exact amount, but Gun-Ho stopped him.

"It's okay. That's enough. I roughly grasped the financial status with this building."

"So, are you still interested in buying this building?"

"I will send my employees to you the day after tomorrow. Please have the accounting manager lady and the Director Yoon person ready, so my employees could talk with them. They will talk in more detail about how to proceed with the sales and purchase."

"Let's make it quiet. I don't want my workers to be worried."

"Yes, sir. I understand."

Gun-Ho gave his business card to President Park before he left the office. He also gave it to the accounting manager lady on his way out.

When he came back to his office in Jiksan Town, Gun-Ho called for Director Yoon.

"Have you heard from the architects in the U.S.?"

"They said they would come here next Monday."

"That's good."

"What is good, sir?"

"Director Yoon, you will need to make a short trip to Seoul the day after tomorrow."

"To Seoul, sir?"

"I will explain to you. Oh, why don't we ask the internal auditor and Manager Jong-Suk Park to come to the office, so I can explain to you all?"

Gun-Ho picked up the interphone and asked the secretary,

"Have the internal auditor and Manager Jong-Suk Park from the production department to come to my office."

"Yes, sir."

After a moment, the internal auditor and Manager Jong-Suk Park came to Gun-Ho's office.

"Why don't we sit here?"

The three men sat at the conference table while wondering what this meeting was about.

Gun-Ho started explaining the situation.

"There is a building in Sinsa Town, Gangnam District, Seoul. It is called RiverStar. It is located at the entrance of Garosugil Road on the main street. The total floor space is 4,200 pyung with the land of 270 pyung; it is a 19-floor building. Its appraised value is 230 billion won, and I want to buy it."

"Huh? Did you just say 230 billion won?"

The three men's jaws dropped and looked at each other in surprise with their mouths still open.

240 Egnopak's President is Furious 3

– PART 1

Gun-Ho laughed and said,

"I don't have 230 billion won. That's not why I want to buy that building. I will lend some money from a bank to acquire that building."

The internal auditor looked at Gun-Ho with a skeptical look on his face.

"Still, you need a significant amount of money to start a loan processing to acquire that expensive building..."

The internal auditor who used to work for a bank couldn't figure out at all how much money Gun-Ho had and the level of capacity Gun-Ho could bring into his business.

'I know this young man is rich, but I can't figure out how rich he is though. When did he make that much money? He is only 30 something years old.'

The internal auditor couldn't understand how Gun-Ho possibly accumulated that much wealth at his young age.

Gun-Ho continued to talk,

"You three need to go to Seoul the day after tomorrow and pay a visit to President Park who is the owner of the RiverStar building in Sinsa Town. His office is located on the 18th floor. Tell him that President Gun-Ho Goo of GH Mobile sent you there. He is actually expecting you."

"Are you going to give him a call before we arrive there?"

"Of course, I will."

"What do you want us to do there?"

"Mr. Internal Auditor, you will have to check the building's liens, the status of

their security deposits, rental income, the depreciation cost, and their building maintenance reserve, and also find out if they have any unpaid taxes. You can take one of our accounting staff if it is necessary."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Yes, sir."

"Once you get there, talk with the accounting manager. Their accounting manager is a 50 something years old lady, and she has been working for President Park for 30 years."

"Yes, sir."

"Director Yoon, I want you to meet with a person there, and they call him Director Yoo."

"Director Yoo? Okay, sir."

"Check the building's design drawing and see if there are any defects, cracks or damage of the building."

"Yes, sir."

"Manager Jong-Suk Park, when you get there, check the building's piping and boiler, and their elevator, electricity, and drainage system. And also see if their automated parking system is in a working condition."

"Yes, sir."

"Don't hover around at work but leave in the early morning of the day after tomorrow."

"Which car are we taking?"

"Don't bring several cars to get there. I think Manager Jong-Suk Park can drive and take you all in his car. Manager Park, why don't you go to the accounting department and ask for prepaid expenses for the trip? You will need it to pay the toll fee and lunch expenses and stuff."

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

After three men left Gun-Ho's office, the sales director entered the office.

"One of our customer companies—Mandong Company wants to talk with you. They want you to come to their office."

"Mandong Company? Why they want to see me?"

"I don't know, sir. Their managing director wants to talk with you."

Mandong Company was one of KOSPI*-listed companies. The company had been doing its business in the field for a long time and it had several subsidiaries and branches; it was a big company.

"How much do we supply to that company?"

"It's our second-largest customer after S Group. We supply our products to them worth 1 billion won per month."

"Can you meet with them on behalf of me?"

"I already suggested to them that I would come by, but they insisted on meeting with you, sir. They seemed to be upset when I asked them if I could meet with them."

"They haven't filed any claim with us about our products, right?"

"No, there is none."

"Hmmm. I can't think of any reason why they want to see me. Let's visit them tomorrow afternoon, and you come with me."

"Yes, sir."

In the afternoon of the following day, Gun-Ho headed to Mandong Company, accompanied by the sales director. It was located in the industrial area in Poseung Town, Pyeongtaek City.

Gun-Ho and the sales director had to leave their ID with the security office at the entrance and sign on their guest book in order to enter the company. It was the

usual process for a big company.

"They must export a lot of their products overseas since they are manufacturing home appliances."

"That's why they are located in the vicinity of Pyeongtaek Port. Their second factory is situated in the Changwon Industrial Complex which is close to Masan Port."

The sales director smiled.

"It's nice that their managing director who wants to see me is in their Pyeongtaek location, rather than in Changwon. It would take us half a day to get Changwon."

Gun-Ho and the sales director waited in a waiting area for a while before Mandong Company's managing director came in with their manager who was in charge of purchasing of necessary products.

"We have once met during the last meeting for the suppliers and vendors, haven't we?"

"We actually met once when the president of Mandong Company held a friendship golf tournament."

"Oh, did we?"

The managing director dragged his chair to sit close to Gun-Ho and leaned toward him.

"President Goo, do you know the president of Egnopak?"

"Yes, I do."

The sales director wondered when the managing director mentioned the company name—Egnopak out of nowhere.

"We haven't done any business with Egnopak."

"Why don't you stay quiet, Mr. Sales Director?"

The sales director couldn't say anything when Mandong's managing director told

him to stay quiet since Mandong was a major customer of GH Mobile.

While the sales director suppressed his desire to say something back to the managing director, Gun-Ho smiled. Gun-Ho thought that even though this man was a managing director of a big company that happened to be GH Mobile's major client, he was just an employee who was working for the company on a salary.

"Is there something I need to know about?"

"Our president is close to the president of Egnopak. Egnopak's president recently pressured our president not to have business with GH Mobile. He even said that GH Mobile's president is a jerk and shouldn't get involved with him for anything."

"He is a cowardly man."

"What?"

The sales director had no idea what these two men were talking about and he was curious. He didn't know something was going on with Egnopak's president.

Gun-Ho was calm and he said,

"Mr. Managing Director, you do know the American company called Lymondell Dyeon, don't you?"

"Of course, I do. It is a global manufacturing company of chemicals."

"The president of Egnopak planned to do a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon and wanted to have a factory in Korea for that business."

"Hmm. I wasn't aware of that."

"And he demanded Lymondell Dyeon 51:49 and they declined Egnopak's offer for a joint venture."

"Hmm."

The managing director was listening to Gun-Ho with his arms crossed, and he

seemed to be enjoying the story that Gun-Ho was telling him.

"So, Lymondell Dyeon picked our company instead, as their co-venturer."

"Huh? What? With GH Mobile?"

"That's right. We will build a factory for the joint venture on the land in Asan City where we used to have our factory. Lymondell Dyeon and GH Mobile agreed on 50:50."

"That sounds right. You have to do 50:50 for an international joint venture."

Note*

KOSPI – Korean Composite Stock Price Indexes

241 Egnopak's President is Furious 3

– PART 2

"That's why Egnopak's president is furious because he lost the opportunity to do a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon after all. He even called me and screamed with cursing words on the phone, then he said I was an arrogant jerk. If he wanted to vent his anger in the deal break with Lymondell Dyeon, he'd better do that with Lymondell Dyeon and not me. He was very rude and unreasonable to me first, and now he is telling people that I am the one who is arrogant and not a decent person. That's preposterous."

"Is that all true?"

"You can do your own investigation by quietly meeting with the workers from Egnopak and GH Mobile, and see which president is really a bad person. There is even a rumor about Egnopak's president's sexual misconduct."

"Sexual misconduct?"

"I heard that when I attended the meeting for business owners in Chungnam Province the other day, held at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. I heard his sexual misconduct was committed against a female secretary."

"I heard you, President Goo. I will summarize what I just heard from you and make a report to our president. By the way, so you really will have a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon? With GH Mobile?"

"We haven't signed on a formal contract yet. We signed a letter of intent last time. They already visited our factory in Korea."

"So, they already visited your factory and the land for a new factory is ready. I guess you will make a contract soon. GH Mobile is awesome. It is not even a big company. It is incredible that you will start a joint venture with a global enterprise like Lymondell Dyeon."

"The economic newspaper already covered about our joint venture with

Lymondell Dyeon."

"Really? I haven't read a newspaper for a while. Well, I do congratulate you on the joint venture. And I will give a report to our president."

"Mandong Company and our previous company— Mulpasaneop have worked together for a long time. We do want to keep our relationship as such in the future as well. I hope you and the president of Mandong Company understand the situation fairly."

"I heard what you said, President Goo."

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim and he said he made a contract with a new customer— another window manufacturing company.

"Did Seukang Li introduce the company again?"

"No, actually, the president of Jinxi Construction Company— Chinkkweo Seon introduced this company to us this time. I guess the cosmetics gift you gave to him last time was effective."

"Haha. I doubt he would do that for a gift."

"So, I asked my mom and dad to buy some cosmetics at the airport duty-free shop when they come to China."

"Oh, your parents are visiting you in China soon?"

"They will meet with my fiancée's parents in Shanghai."

"Oh, I see. That's nice."

"My mom and dad are studying Chinese in a learning center these days."

"Haha. Really?"

"Oh, I was going to let you know. We already paid all the remaining balance for the storage we purchased. I haven't hired any security guard yet since the storage is currently empty."

"Okay. Keep up the good job."

The internal auditor, Director Yoon, and Jong-Suk Park came back from their short trip to Seoul.

The internal auditor made a report to Gun-Ho first.

"I've met with President Park of RiverStart Building and also with their accounting manager. She organized all the necessary information in Excel including the liens, security deposits, rental income, etc. She said she was expecting us and prepared the file for us."

"Given all the new information you acquired, how much do you think we need to make an offer of?"

"If we can buy that building for under 200 billion won, it is a good price. If we can do that, we will need 40 billion won in cash, since we have security deposits that we need to consider."

"Do you think there won't be any problem in running that building if we purchase that building for below 200 billion won?"

"The building requires loan interest, labor cost, operating cost, depreciation cost, and maintenance reserve. If we consider all of the above, the building owner will make the profit in the range of 80 and 100 million won on a monthly basis. Since you will have to use your cash of 40 billion won, it's more like an interest income from a bank if you save that 40 billion won with a bank. It's a bit higher than a time deposit rate with a bank."

"So I would make more money if I run a factory that would cost me 40 billion won."

"Well, you need to consider the value of the building and its price will increase. Also you can raise the rent next year. It's really hard to compare with a factory considering only a few factors."

"How much do you think the building owner will make from this sale?"

"That is the problem, sir. The seller would ask at least 210 billion won, so he could make 10 billion won."

"What if I decline that high price?"

"Then, he wouldn't sell it since he wouldn't make much money out of the sale. Even though he currently doesn't make much by running the building, he is not losing money either by keeping it."

"Hmm."

"I will give you a report about what I found from yesterday's trip."

Director Yoon said while holding a piece of paper.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Okay, go ahead."

"I verified the building's design drawing with the Director Yoo person. I couldn't take that drawing with me since the building is still theirs."

"That makes sense."

"I found cracks in several places. If we acquire that building, we will have to fix those areas. We also need to replace the guardrail at the emergency exit on the 4th floor. Water is leaking in the basement, and that should be addressed as well. Other than that, I haven't seen any other problems."

It was Jong-Suk-Park's turn to make a report.

"The boiler room was fine. Some of alarm bells are out of order though. The machine in the basement parking lot is not working. The elevator works well and it seems that they recently fixed it. I didn't see any other area to be fixed."

"Okay. Thank you all."

Gun-Ho started thinking while sitting at his office by himself after the three workers left the office.

"Should I acquire that building with my 40 billion won?"

Gun-Ho calculated with his electronic calculator.

He still couldn't decide whether he should or he should not buy that building. He

made a phone call to the bank branch manager in Gangnam.

"If I decide to acquire a building in Sinsa Town, which is priced for 200 billion won, can you support me 65% of the price?"

"I will have to discuss it with our head office first before I could give you the answer."

"Why don't you talk with your head office and get back to me?"

Gun-Ho made a phone call to the building owner— President Park.

"I will give you 90% of the appraised value."

"I can't sell you the building for that price. I have to make something out of the sale, right?"

"I can't bring more funds on the table."

"Then we have no deal."

"Okay."

Gun-Ho hung up the phone, and he hadn't made a phone call anymore to President Park for a while. President Park hadn't called Gun-Ho either.

Gun-Ho received a call from the bank branch manager in Gangnam.

"I talked with our head office. We can lend you 60% of the appraised value of the building."

"That means I can't buy that building."

"Instead, Gangnam Capital which is one of our group will support you the other 5%. That will make 65% loan that you initially requested."

"Capital gives a loan at a high-interest rate."

"That... nothing much I can do about it."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Chairman Lee in Cheongdam Town.

"Have you met with President Park?"

"Yes. I offered him 90% of the building's appraised value, and he rejected the offer."

"90% should be enough. He shouldn't ask more than that. He probably wants to take the building with him when he dies."

"He said, he won't make any money if he sells his building for that price."

"Hmm, really? Let me talk with him."

Chairman Lee hung up the phone.

242 GH Building in Gangnam 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho drove to Seoul to meet with the bank branch manager in Gangnam.

"I have 40 billion won in my account. Please transfer all of them to the GH company bank account."

"Are you going to purchase the building with the company's name?"

"I think that would be better."

"Once you make a sales and purchase contract for the building, please let me know right away. I will contact the branch manager of the Capital."

"Thank you."

Once he walked out of the bank in Gangnam, Gun-Ho headed to his office in the same area— GH Development. He felt that his office of GH Development was small after he spent many days in a large office in Jiksan Town. The workers of GH Media came to the office from their office next door to say hello to Gun-Ho.

"How are you all?"

"We are printing the third and the fourth edition of the Japanese book— the person who wakes up in the morning. The book is selling really well."

"That's good to hear."

"The business management book that you recommended and Professor Jien Wang's book are doing okay. One Japanese book is doing great while the other two are not good."

"The sales income from the book that you are publishing 3rd and 4th edition will recover the loss we incurred from other books?"

"We are not just recovering our loss from that book, but it will bring enough

income to sustain GH Media at least for a year. You will get the investment return from it too, sir."

"Haha. Everyone did a good job. You can go back to your office and keep up with your great work. I am here for an important meeting with GH Development."

Manager Kang and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong felt nervous when Gun-Ho said he had important things to talk about with GH Development. Once all of the workers of GH Media were dismissed, Gun-Ho asked Manager Kang and Ji-Young to sit at a table. Manager Kang and Ji-Young felt more difficult to be with Gun-Ho than before.

Gun-Ho continued to talk while smiling and he wanted to ease his workers of GH Development.

"Let's have some tea while we are having our meeting."

Ji-Young quickly brought green tea.

"I have the bank book of our major bank with me for the GH Development while the bank book for the company operation expenses is here with you."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young were all ears.

"I just deposited 40 billion won into the GH Development bank account."

"40 billion won!?"

Manager Kang and Ji-Young were frightened when they heard the amount of 40 billion won. They had never seen that kind of money in their entire lives.

"I brought the account balance sheet with me. Manager Kang, please take this with you and increase the capital stock of GH Development as such."

"Huh? Did you just say 40 billion won, sir?"

"We will acquire a 19-floor building in Sinsa Town. Its appraised value is 230 billion won and I am currently negotiating the price with the seller. We will buy the building under the GH Development's name with this 40 billion won, and we

will loan the remaining balance from a bank. For now, increase GH Development's capital stock for an additional 40 billion won after you talk with the certified legal consultant."

"Yes, sir."

Manager Kang and Ji-Young found themselves shaking.

"Let's sell our OneRoomTels."

"Selling the OneRoomTels?"

"Yes, and deposit the sales proceeds into our company's major bank account."

"Yes, sir."

"Okay, that's all I needed to talk about with you today. I am leaving for Jiksan Town in Cheonan City now."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

When Gun-Ho had acquired Mulpasaneop, he bought the company with their debts as well. Since Gun-Ho had enough cash in his bank account, he could have bought the company and paid off their debts, but he chose not to.

"It's not bad to have some debt for a company because the government treats the loan interest as a business expense."

GH Mobile paid off all of Mulpasaneop's small debts but they still had large debts from raw material suppliers. Gun-Ho convinced these companies that GH Mobile would gradually pay the debts while still doing business with them. The creditor companies understood the situation since they were aware that Mulpasaneop was once under court receivership.

However, one of the creditor companies suddenly filed a lawsuit against GH Mobile and it was Seongil Polymer. It was a company which usually bought raw materials from a large company and sold them to other businesses, it was more like a sales agency company.

The internal officer brought the lawsuit document for an unpaid bill filed by Seongil Polymer and the provisional seizure of the new factory in Jiksan Town.

"How much do we owe to Seongil Polymer?"

"It's 300 million won."

"Have you called them to talk about this?"

"I have, and I asked them why they filed a lawsuit against us given our current relationship. They said they are currently experiencing financial difficulty with the business."

"This is getting serious since they seized our new factory."

"The sales director has a close relationship with the president of Seongil Polymer and he talked with him too. Our sales director told him that we are gradually paying off the debt and we are still doing business together, and he doesn't understand why Seongil Polymer filed a lawsuit in this situation."

"What was his response?"

"They said that they are not doing well financially and they haven't paid their workers for a while, so they need the money right now."

"Can we pay off their 300 million won now?"

"We can, but we will have to delay our worker's payment. Even though we are doing better, we still don't have enough funds yet."

"Hmm."

"We can't borrow additional money from a bank either. Our loan with a bank reached the maximum amount they allow. The only way I can think of is getting hard money for quick temporary use, but it's very risky."

"We just have to pay a bit higher interest rate for the hard money use, don't we?"

"That's not the only consequence we need to concern. Once we pay off Seongil Polymer's debt, other creditor companies will ask the same. They will ask us to

treat them equally with Seongil Polymer."

"What if we just let it sit?"

"If the plaintiff wins, the court will make a payment order, then they will force us to pay."

"Does it mean that they will seize our company's machines or automobiles?"

"They will probably seize the accounts receivable such as the payment we are expecting to receive from our major customers—S Group or Mandong Company, rather than our equipment or cars. Moreover, since they already seized our factory, they can request to put it up for sale."

"Because of 300 million won, our factory can be put up for sale which is worth 7 billion won."

"That's right. Considering the price of the land and construction cost of our new building, it will be worth at least 7 billion won. Many companies go bankrupt because of a small amount of money that they can't pay at a certain time."

"What do you suggest, Mr. Internal Auditor?"

"I will buy some time for now."

"What's your plan to do that?"

"I will file an objection to the court, and tell them that Seongil Polymer and our company—

GH Mobile already agreed on an installment payment plan for the existing debt, but now they are unreasonably asking us to pay the entire amount of debt by filing a lawsuit. That's not fair."

"If we do so, the judge will determine that there is something to dispute and he will order a trial."

"Exactly. While we proceed with the trial and buy some time accordingly, we will keep trying to convince the president of Seongil Polymer."

"I see. I will talk with Seongil Polymer's president first."

"That's a good idea, sir. I think it will be more effective if you, as the owner president talk with him directly, rather than one of the directors meets him."

"I see what you mean. I will visit Seongil Polymer with our manager in the purchasing team."

"Since we need to file the objection with the court within two weeks, I will start preparing necessary documents."

"Sounds good."

243 GH Building in Gangnam 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho thought of Seongil Polymer and its president. Their president had a round face.

"He looked like an earnest man. I don't understand why he would do such a thing."

Gun-Ho thought that there had to be a reason for this.

Gun-Ho asked for the manager in the purchasing team.

"How long have we been doing business with Seongil Polymer?"

"If we count the days of Mulpasantop, it has been more than ten years since we started working with them. I've been very close with Seongil Polymer's president, and we called each other as big brother and younger brother. When I heard about their lawsuit against our company, I told him I wouldn't continue our close relationship with him and I was so upset."

"What did he say?"

"He said there is nothing much he can do about it."

"If they need money, they could have come to us and tried to work out, but they instead filed a lawsuit against us."

"Right. I don't understand why he did that. That's not like him at all. I was surprised by his action this time. Well, I guess you can't truly know a person."

"How large is that company?"

"The president of Seongil Polymer is the brother-in-law of the Hanyoung Group's vice president. Seongil Polymer takes Hanyoung Chemical's raw materials and sells them. Their annual sales revenue is about 8 billion won. They have 30 employees."

"They are actually a sizable company."

"Their customer companies are usually small companies except for us and Egnopak."

Gun-Ho was frightened.

"Did you just say Egnopak?"

"Yes, it's a KOSDAQ registered firm which is located in Jinwi Town, Pyeongtaek City. Seongil Polymer sells its products to Egnopak about 300 million won, and to our company, about 100 million won."

Gun-Ho bit his lip.

'It was the Egnopak's president.'

It was highly probable that the Egnopak's president promised Seongil Polymer that they would buy more of their products and asked them to file a lawsuit against GH Mobile in return.

"He is absolutely cowardly!"

The purchasing team's manager thought Gun-Ho was calling the Seongil Polymer's president as cowardly, and he agreed with Gun-Ho.

"The president of Seongil Polymer is definitely cowardly. He plays dirty."

"Let's set up a meeting with Seongil Polymer's president in the near future and you will come with me to meet with him."

"Yes, sir."

The purchase team's manager bowed to Gun-Ho and left his office.

Gun-Ho received a call from Chairman Lee of Cheongdam Town.

"Will you be available tomorrow? I made an appointment with President Park tomorrow evening."

"Where should I go to?"

"Come to the bar in Hannam Town. You will have to treat us though."

"Of course, sir. I will be there tomorrow."

"Don't be late."

"Yes, sir. Can I bring a friend with me?"

"Your friend? Who? Manager Jong-Suk Park? That's not a good idea..."

"No, sir. Not Jong-Suk, but I will come with an attorney from Kim & Jeong."

"Oh, an attorney? That sounds good. We might have to talk about some legal stuff before we make a contract. Sure, bring him with you."

"Thank you."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"Hey, it's me, Gun-Ho Goo."

"You haven't called me for a while. It seems you are doing well in Jiksan Town."

"It's all the same whether it is Seoul or Jiksan Town. I think it will take the same time from your office in the Gwanghwamun Gate area to Gangnam Station and from my place in Jiksan Town to Gangnam Station."

"Is that so?"

"Do you have time tomorrow? Let's meet in Hannam Town tomorrow. Well, since Hannam Town is more distant than Gangnam Station, it will take more time from my place."

"Why? Do you have any good news?"

"I am buying a building. It's a 19-floor building on the main road in Sinsa Town."

"Acquiring a building? Wow. You are so rich."

"I will need you in Hannam Town tomorrow. I want you to review a contract and

examine any possible legal issues. I need your consultation."

"Are you requesting an attorney? Or a friend?"

"Of course, I am asking you as an attorney. I will pay you legal fees."

"Sure. I will definitely be there."

"The appointment is at 7 pm. We will meet with old men, so you will have to arrive there at least 10 minutes earlier."

The following day, Gun-Ho left his car at his TowerPalace in Dogok Town and took a taxi heading to Hannam Town. When he arrived at the bar's front door, the bouncers came out and greeted Gun-Ho. The one in the middle gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho.

"Brother, welcome to Pine."

"Oh, Security Team Leader Tae-Young Im! How have you been?"

Gun-Ho tapped his back and the bouncer lowered his head.

"Thank you for remembering my name, brother."

"Did they arrive?"

"Not yet."

"Really?"

When they heard other customers coming into the bar, the bouncers ran to the front door.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

It was not Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town or President Park—the owner of the building in Sinsa Town. It was other several middle-aged men.

"Mr. Minister, welcome to Pine."

"Mr. Congressman, it has been a while. Please come in."

Gun-Ho could guess that they were high ranked government officials by listening to the bouncers talking to those customers.

The minister and congressmen glanced at Gun-Ho before they entered the bar.

Ms. Jang came out and started making a fuss.

"President Goo. Welcome. Attorney Kim is here already waiting for you. President Park and Chairman Lee will arrive soon. Please come this way."

"Thank you, Ms. Jang. You don't have to worry about me, but take your time with other guests. It seems you are having high ranked officials today."

"Hahaha, the highest-ranked client to our bar is you, President Goo. You are buying more than anyone in our bar among other customers."

Gun-Ho entered the room that Ms. Jang showed.

Attorney Kim was watching TV in the room, and he stood up when he saw Gun-Ho entering the room.

"You came early?"

"No, I just arrived."

"Let's have a seat."

"How big is the building you are trying to acquire?"

"Its total floor space is 4,200 pyung and the land is 270 pyung. I brought the real estate registration."

"The building coverage ratio is 80%? I am not sure if that includes the basement. Well, it doesn't really matter. What is its appraised value?"

"It's 230 billion won."

"Wow. So, you are buying that enormous building?"

"Yeah, with a loan."

"I am so envious of you, Mr. Billionaire."

"Can you draft a sales & purchase agreement and conduct any due diligence beforehand?"

At that moment, Gun-Ho heard a dry cough outside the room.

"I think they arrived."

Ms. Jang's laughing sound filled the air.

"President Park! You came. It is the first time in a decade."

"Why? I shouldn't come here?"

"I thought you passed away since you haven't come here for too long."

"I'm here alive!"

"Please come up to the floor. Hold my hand. You look healthy."

"Your hand is still warm just like the old days."

"That's because I have a warm heart."

Once the two old men entered the room, Gun-Ho showed them a seat.

"Please have a seat over here, sir."

"Is this young man an attorney?"

"Yes, I am, sir. I'm Young-Jin Kim."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim gave his business card to Chairman Lee and President Park.

They had a drink while listening to Gayageum.

Chairman Lee and President Park were talking about their old days without

saying a word about the building.

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin played along and talked about soccer, movies, and other trivial things.

Ms. Jang entered the room and clicked her tongue.

"You should blend in, rather than dividing up into the old man's group and young man's group. Why don't you listen to the music of the 70s or 80s? And stop listening to Gayageum? The music in the 70s and 80s is old songs for President Goo and Attorney Kim, but they are new songs to Chairman Lee and President Park."

Young ladies entered the room. They were not wearing traditional Korean dresses, but instead, they were wearing very short pants with a blouse.

One of the ladies carried an acoustic guitar. The ladies started singing songs that were popular in the 70s and 80s while playing the guitar. They were probably would-be singers because they sound like professionals.

Gun-Ho gave 100,000 won to each girl and told them to use it for their transportation expenses.

244 GH Building in Gangnam 2 – PART 1

Once the young ladies with a guitar left the room, Chairman Lee finally talked about the building.

"President Park, why don't you just sell your building to the person who really wants to buy it? You never know if you will find another person who would want your building. Let's make it 200 billion won."

"If I sell it for that price, nothing much would be left in my hand. Once I sell the building, I want to share the sales proceeds with my children. Moreover, I am not losing money by keeping that building even though I'm not making much money from it, either."

"Then you'd better keep that building."

"I want to sell that building because of my children. They try to financially rely on me just because I have that big building. I want them to become more independent."

"What about your second daughter? She is doing well, right? Her husband is running a hospital."

"Same thing. Even though you have enough money, you want more. That's money."

"How much do you want to sell that building for then?"

"210 billion won."

"What about you, President Goo? How much are you willing to pay for that building?"

"My offer is 200 billion won, sir."

"Hmm. Let's do this then. What about you both meet halfway like 205 billion

won? Let's close the deal with that price. Don't say anything more. Attorney Kim! Pull out the contract."

"Yes, sir."

"No, no, that's... Well... Okay! Let's do it!"

"Good. My friend, let's sell that building and have fun traveling to Goesan Town to see Master Park."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho acquired the building in Sinsa Town, Gangnam District for 205 billion won.

It seemed that President Park wanted to let his children and others find out that his building was sold because he leaked the sale of his building to the press. Not just the economic newspaper but even a daily newspaper talked about President Park's building's sale.

[RiverStar Building in Sinsa Town, Gangnam District has sold for 205 billion won. The building is located at the entrance of Garosugil Road on the main street. It has been a landmark in the area. The building is also a popular place to meet someone since they have a huge coffee shop. The buyer of the building is Mr. Gun-Ho Goo (35) who is known as a big player of Gangnam. Mr. Gun-Ho Goo is known as a successful and wealthy businessman in the area of OneRoomTel rental property business and also auto parts manufacturing.]

Once the news article was published, people who knew Gun-Ho Goo were astonished.

"I knew he had some money, but I didn't know he is that rich."

People seemed to assume that Gun-Ho had 205 billion won in cash. Gun-Ho's high school friends couldn't even give a call to Gun-Ho to congratulate him on acquiring the building because Gun-Ho didn't seem to be living in the same world as they were.

The president of Egnopak read the news article as well.

"Hmm. This young man is doing very well. Maybe he has someone behind him, someone who is really rich. According to my investigation, he has no connection with any politician, but he is doing too well. I think I will have to step on him before he grows too big."

Egnopak's president called for his son who was in the US and also the in-house attorney in the company, in order to discuss what they were going to do about Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho went to Seongil Polymer with GH Mobile's purchasing team's manager to Suwon.

The president of Seongil Polymer looked nervous when he saw Gun-Ho.

"Our company is so small that you might not feel very comfortable. Please sit at the middle of the table, sir."

"It's not small. The building is new. Do you have storage in a separate building?"

"Our storage is located in the building next door. This building is being used for just office work."

"Forgive me if I am too blunt. Why did you do that?"

"We are currently experiencing great financial difficulty. We have 30 employees, and it's really hard to pay them all the time these days. We can't lower the product cost that we supply to your company—GH Mobile. I couldn't think of any other way to sustain my company."

"You could have come and talked to me about the situation. You could have asked us to raise the product cost. You shouldn't have just filed a lawsuit without trying to work it out with us first."

"That was... umm..."

"We filed our objection to the court for now. I guess we will have a trial soon."

"Is there any way that you could just pay off the debt?"

"You mean the entire 300 million won all at once?"

"Well... umm..."

"Let's be honest. What was the deal with the president of Egnopak?"

"Egnopak's president? What are you talking about?"

"I already figured out the situation. What did he promise you?"

"I think you misunderstood me, President Goo. This has nothing to do with Egnopak's president."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"Seongil Polymer has been a good business partner even when GH Mobile was still Mulpasaneop; you have provided us with raw materials for more than ten years. You are very well aware of our company's situation, and additionally, you agreed on our installment payment plan. We were so overwhelmed when we found out that you filed a lawsuit against us."

"I am so sorry."

"I am very disappointed with Seongil Polymer. The way how Seongil Polymer handled the situation was really disappointing. Don't blame us later for any consequences regarding your lawsuit against us."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I will keep an eye on your business with Egnopak and see if they're buying more products from your company."

"You keep saying Egnopak, but this has nothing to do with them."

"Well, it is pointless to talk with you any further since you refuse to be honest with me. Mr. Purchasing Manager, let's go back to our company."

On the way to GH Mobile in Jiksan Town, Gun-Ho said to the manager, "Stop the business with Seongil Polymer starting tomorrow. We can find another company for the raw materials we are buying from Seongil Polymer, right?"

"Yes, but we will have to let our customer companies know that we are changing the supplier who provides the raw materials for our products."

"Then tell them that we changed our raw material supplier—Seongil Polymer—to another company because we found some foreign substances from their raw materials."

"Yes, sir. I have a question, sir. What do we have to do with Egnopak?"

"They were the competitor for the joint venture project that I am trying to build in Asan City."

Gun-Ho went to Seoul to pay President Park for the building he was buying. He used his cash, a loan from a bank, and a loan from Capital."

Gun-Ho then sent Manager Kang and Ji-Young to the building to grasp the current state of tenants in the building. Manager Kim, the lady who was the secretary and also the person in charge of the accounting, handed a chart over to Manager Kang. The chart was very well organized with information about the entire tenants of the building.

"I guess the tenants will all stay, and we just need to vacate this office."

Gun-Ho was thinking of sending Director Yoon, Manager Jong-Suk Park and the general affairs manager to the building in Sinsa town. He wanted them to retrieve the building's design drawings and the information about the current workers, and he also wanted them to check the facility.

Gun-Ho made a call to Manager Kang of GH Development.

"Manager Kang, I am sending GH Mobile's director who is in charge of construction, technical manager, and general affairs manager to the building. They are the experts in the building construction and system. Let them use President Park's office for now. And once the acquisition process is complete, discuss with Director Yoon who is in charge of construction and do the interior work. I will need my office there. Let go of some of the tenants whose lease contract expires soon and who are occupying 19th or 18th floor and use that space to make my office."

"Yes, sir."

Manager Kang was so worried when Gun-Ho first told him that he would acquire the building in Sinsa Town. It was enormous in size, and he was overwhelmed about the work he might have to handle. There were security guards, a cleaning crew, boiler technician, automatic parking system handlers, and so on, and Manager Kang couldn't decide where he should start his work. When Gun-Ho told him that he would send the experts in the field, he felt a sense of relief. He let out a deep sigh of relief.

245 GH Building in Gangnam 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho received a phone call from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

"President Goo, I have a favor to ask of you."

"A favor?"

"I understand that you are moving your GH Mobile's office to the building in Sinsa Town. We have enjoyed the company of GH Mobile that was our next-door neighbor, and we received a lot of help from them."

"Oh, would you like to move your office to the building in Sinsa Town with us? I will have to check if there is any vacant office though."

"The rent in that building is too high for our business. So I was thinking of moving our publishing office somewhere else."

"Where do you want to move to?"

"The publishing complex in Paju City would be a great choice to move our office. It has a very clean and neat environment, and the rent is pretty reasonable; however, it's too far from our current location and our workers are reluctant to move there. So, I am thinking of moving to Hapjeong Town or Mangwon Town in Mapo District."

"Hmm, Mangwon Town..."

"We can get an office there with twice bigger size than the current one with the same amount of rent."

"I will let you decide on that."

"Okay, sir. I will move our office to that location then, assuming you approved our moving."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Manager Kang of GH Mobile.

"Please place our current office-tel of GH Mobile on the market for sale."

"Our office-tel, sir?"

"Yes, I purchased that office-tel with my name, not with the company's name. So once the office-tel is sold, please put the sales proceeds to my personal bank account."

"Yes, sir. And... umm..."

"Do you have something you want to tell me?"

"I've already placed all of our four OneRoomTels on the market for sale. They will sell easily. However..."

"What is it?"

"The chief editor of GH Media is living in one of our OneRoomTels. What should I do about it?"

"Oh, you mean Jae-Sik Moon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, we will have to tell him to vacate his room. I will talk to him."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho called Jae-Sik Moon.

"Jae-Sik?"

"Hey, President Goo."

"How is your work?"

"It's fun. I like here a lot. President Shin appreciates my work too."

"That's nice. I am calling you to tell you that I will have to sell the

OneRoomTels. As you know, I am buying a large building in Sinsa Town, and I need money. You'll be on your own in finding your place to stay from now on."

"Oh, that? Don't worry about it. Once our GH Media moves to Mapo Town, I will find a room there. I used to live in Mangwon Town which is very close to Mapo Town when I worked for another publishing company. I love the area. Many people in the publishing field are living there."

"Really?"

"Don't worry about my rent. I am making a lot of money now, and I can handle my rent."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah. The translated book of 'the person who wakes up in the morning' is selling very well. It is the best-selling book that I've ever done editing work on."

"Did President Shin find an office there already?"

"We have looked at two offices in Hapjeong Town. They are so spacious, and they are asking the same rent that we are paying right now. Oh, I was going to ask you about this. Can you make a president's office in our new office? I think President Shin should have her own office. She often meets with clients, and it would be nice if she has her own office."

"What about the chief editor's office?"

"Oh, my own office? Haha. A chief editor doesn't usually get his own office. It's not necessary. Usually, we get a cubicle office."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho received a call from Manager Jong-Suk Park who was currently working out at the building in Sinsa Town.

"Bro? There is nothing here for me to work on anymore. I want to go back to Jiksan Town."

"Have you met with the security guards and boiler technicians? They are all good workers, right?"

"Yeah, I've already made a good connection with everyone here in the field. They are not very skillful though, so I fixed everything for them like the boiler, automatic parking system, and even the toilet. They were very satisfied, and they asked me to stay there with them. But I really have to go back to Jiksan. I need to know if things are going well there."

"MacGyver Park is always popular wherever he goes."

"I think we need to have a team leader here. The person who is in charge of the automatic parking system has an electrician license and building management license. He is very good too. I think he is a good candidate for the team leader position. What do you think? He seemed to be not happy to receive the same treatment as other workers."

"Really? Why don't you talk to Manager Kang of GH Mobile?"

"Well, Manager Kang is good at administrative work, but he doesn't know much about the work in the worksite."

"Did they already start the interior work?"

"It's almost done. They are building a large president's office too. It's located on the 19th floor, and it has a very nice view. You would be able to see the entire Sinsa Town in Gangnam District. You are going to stay in that office from time to time, right?"

"How old is the man who is in charge of the automatic parking system?"

"He is about 50. He is physically strong. He completed his military service at the airborne forces. Well, I won over him in the arm wrestling though."

"Who would be able to beat you at arm wrestling?"

"There is one person who I really want to fight at an arm wrestling match."

"Who?"

"The weightlifter—Mi-Ran Jang."

"You crazy. Okay, come back to Jiksan Town. Make sure you tell Director Yoon and Manager Kang before you head to Jiksan, okay?"

GH Media's president—Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin—gave a report to Gun-Ho on the phone about their office moving.

"We made a lease contract with an office in Hangjeong Town. It's 40 pyung. The rent is the same as the rent of our office in Gangnam. But they asked a bit higher security deposit, so we spent an additional 20 million won for it."

"Why don't you do some interior work and make your office there too?"

"A president's office...?"

"Yes. Clients are often coming over to the office to meet with you, so I guess it's better that you have your own office even though it's not big."

"Thank you."

"The new office is close to your home, right?"

"Yes. I can take the Subway Line 2 from my house—Mullae Town—then I can get to the new office in no time. Our chief editor found his room in Mangwon Town."

"Really? That's nice."

"We will be working harder. I've already chosen a fourth book that we will publish. I will send you the book title."

"You don't have to do that, President Shin. I don't have time to read a book now. Why don't you just make a report to me about the loss and profit?"

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

246 GH Building in Gangnam 3 – PART 1

The interior work had been completed for the building in Sinsa Town, and Gun-Ho headed for Seoul. The new office on the 19th floor looked fabulous.

"As you requested, sir, this office is 70 pyung large in total. 30 pyung out of 70 is decorated for the office space, 10 pyung is used for a meeting room, and the remaining 30 pyung is your office, sir."

The office space was covered with a carpet, and a window curtain was already installed. The desk and bookshelf in the office were the best quality furniture in Korea. A sofa and a conference table were placed as well.

"As you instructed, all furnitures and necessary office supplies were already put in the office."

"You did a very good job."

Gun-Ho sat at his new desk for a while and then looked out the window.

"Nice view."

"That's right. The workers who came for the interior work were all amazed by the view from the window."

"Manager Kang, you must have been working so hard. Your lips are swollen."

"As a matter of fact, I lost 5 kilograms, which is good because I wanted to lose some weight, anyway."

"Do we have ten workers in total for this building?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is supervising them?"

"Manager Jong-Suk Park has been supervising them. I wish he could stay here. We will have to find someone like him as a supervisor."

"Manager Jong-Suk Park can't work here. We need him at the factory in Jiksan Town. He has to continue his work maintaining our factory there."

"Manager Jong-Suk Park seems to be able to fix anything with just a screwdriver."

"Do we have employees' file that contains the current worker's resume?"

"Yes, we do."

Manager Kang brought a file for Gun-Ho.

"Can you ask the person who is now handling the automated parking system to come to my office? He seems to have several skill certificates."

"Yes, sir."

A man who looked like he was in his early 50s entered Gun-Ho's office.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Are you Mr. Soo-Nam Jeong?"

"Yes, I am, sir."

"You have a building management license. You also have a security instructor license, an electrical safety license, and a fire safety license. Have you previously worked in managing a building? What was your occupation before you join here?"

"I used to manage a small 10-floor building before."

"How long have you worked here?"

"I have been working here for about two years now."

"Manager Kang, please place him in the field as a team leader."

"Yes, sir."

"Also, change their uniforms to the ones of GH Mobile. Their uniforms are too shabby. You can just change the company logo from GH Mobile to GH Development on the uniforms. You can ask the general affairs department in GH Mobile to place orders for the new uniforms."

"Yes, sir."

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, your daily work is about to become complex since you'll be managing this building. Get an accounting software. We are now managing a large building, which is different from managing a few OneRoomTels as we did before."

"Umm, sir. I haven't used an accounting program before."

Ji-Young Jeong suddenly started crying after saying that. Gun-Ho was baffled.

"Okay, let's do this. We will have to hire additional workers, anyway."

Manager Kang had a pen and paper ready.

"Ms. Ji-Young Jeong takes the position as a general manager in managing the Four Major Public Insurance. You will have to manage the tenants in this building as well in addition to the Four Major Public Insurance."

"Yes, sir."

"Post a job opening for accounting staff who will be handling the accounting program and for a secretary position who can speak English."

"Yes, sir."

"I have one more task for you, Manager Kang. Send an official announcement to the tenants and let them know the recent changes. Tell them that the name of the building would be changed from RiverStar Building to GH Building and that the building owner is changed as well. We will have to issue tax invoices to these tenants with our company's name—GH Development."

"I am on it, sir."

Once everyone left Gun-Ho's office, Gun-Ho closed his office door. His office on the 19th floor was very quiet. The Gangnam district, which Gun-Ho was looking over from his office, looked so small that people looked like ants. Gun-Ho was now the new owner of the building in Gangnam.

Gun-Ho looked down the city from his office window.

"My future GH Holdings will be based in this building!"

While Gun-Ho was thinking of his future plans with the building, someone knocked on the door. It was Manager Kang.

"I have everyone here to meet with you, sir."

Mr. Soo-Nam Jeong, who was just promoted to a team leader, had the other workers make a line and shouted at them.

"Attention! And bow to our president!"

The workers were cleaning workers and security guards, and they were old men and ladies, mostly.

Gun-Ho offered his hand to each worker for a handshake and encouraged them to work hard before dismissing them.

Gun-Ho bought a few books from Youngpoong Bookstore that was located at the Gangnam Express Bus Terminal. They were economics and business management books. He then read the books in the comfortable sofa in his new office. It was nice, and Gun-Ho enjoyed spending time in his new office. Gun-Ho didn't go to the factory in Jiksan Town for the next few days.

Gun-Ho received a call from Director Yoon.

"The architect from U.S. is coming tomorrow."

"Really? Someone has to pick him up at the airport."

"I will do it, sir."

"Sure. You speak English very well, so you should be good. I am wrapping up

things here, and I will come back to the factory in Jiksan Town tomorrow."

Once Gun-Ho came back to GH Mobile in Jiksan Town, the directors and managers started giving him a report, which they would have done if Gun-Ho was there for the past several days.

"You can give a report to the internal auditor for trivial matters and get approval from him."

Gun-Ho delegated a lot of work to the directors and managers. He asked the general affairs manager to implement a policy about the delegation of his authority to the directors or managers, so they could review and approve certain things on his behalf.

After Gun-Ho acquired the building in Sinsa Town, the workers of GH Mobile acted differently around Gun-Ho. They became more respectful and gave him a deeper bow than before, and Gun-Ho began to exude charisma.

After receiving reports from the directors, Gun-Ho asked for the manager in the purchasing team.

"Have you heard anything from the Seongil Polymer's president?"

"They are making an outcry for the unilateral termination of our business relationship with them. Their president wanted to get your cell phone number, sir. Of course, I refused to give it to him. He even came to our company yesterday to meet with you in person."

"Check if they are recently getting more product orders from Egnopak."

"I actually asked one of their female staff about it, and she said they are definitely having more product orders from Egnopak lately."

"I knew it."

"What do you want me to tell him if the Seongil Polymer's president comes to our company again?"

"Ask him to show us their monthly total sales revenue of the products that were sold and issued tax invoice to Egnopak. Well, it would be better if we could get

their general ledger specifically, where we can see all of their dealings with Egnopak, retrieved from their accounting program. Then we will consider restarting the business with them."

"Yes, sir. And... the internal auditor said that the trial with Seongil Polymer will soon start."

"We will figure out once a trial is ordered"

"Yes, sir."

247 GH Building in Gangnam 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho asked for the internal auditor.

"I've heard that the trial with Seongil Polymer will start soon. How are we going to defend our case?"

"We will convince the court about our current financial situation and the installment payment plan. Since the court is well aware of the fact that we were once under court receivership, it will approve our installment payment plan."

"You really think so?"

"The judge is a human being. He will be reasonable."

Gun-Ho received a call from Director Yoon, who was at the airport.

"The architects arrived at 4 pm from the U.S. If we head to Asan City now, we will arrive at around 6 pm."

"He must be exhausted from the long flight from the U.S. Why don't you take him to the hotel in Asan City and let him take a good rest for today, and he can come to our office in Jiksan Town tomorrow before he heads to Asan City."

"Yes, sir."

The next morning, Director Yoon came to Gun-Ho's office with one American and one Korean man. They both were architects from the U.S.

Gun-Ho greeted them.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Welcome to Korea and to our company. Director Yoon will show you the place where our new factory will be built on."

"Director Yoon invited us to a Korean restaurant for dinner yesterday. It was really nice, and we appreciate it. We also had the hot spring bath as well."

"You have been to Lymondell Dyeon, right?"

"Yes, we have, and we took a good look at their production line. The cooling line after the extrusion is longer than we initially thought, so I think we will have to build the production space long enough to accommodate those."

"Can you make the exterior of the factory similar to the one of Lymondell Dyeon?"

"Sure. We can do that."

"By the way, Director Yoon. The design drawing will be made in English. Do you think our government people in the city hall will be able to read it?"

"Haha. That's why they require having a Korean architect to sign on the design drawing if the drawing is made by a foreign architect, so we will have two signatures on the paper from the foreign architect and Korean architect. I mean the approval document for constructing a building."

"Is it legally required?"

"Of course, sir. It is clearly written in the Building Act."

"I see."

"I will take care of it. Well, we will be then heading to Asan City now if you don't have anything else, sir."

Director Yoon showed the land in Asan City where a new factory would be built on, to the architects from the U.S. The architects collected some necessary information from there by taking some pictures and reviewing the land survey. Once they completed their examination of the land, they headed back to Seoul.

Gun-Ho received a call from Chairman Lee in Cheongdam Town.

"President Goo, do you want to have lunch with me today since you are close to my office now? I know a good place for cold noodles."

"Umm, sir. I am not in Seoul right now. I am in Jiksan Town."

"Oh, really? I thought you were staying in Seoul."

"Have you heard anything from President Park who sold his building to me? I'm wondering if there are any complaints from him."

"You know what? He is a very scary person."

"Huh? Why do you say so?"

"He told his children that he had 9 billion won left after selling the building and paying off the loan and security deposit."

"As far as I know, that sounds correct."

"He gave 2 billion won to each of his two daughters from his first wife."

"That made him spend 4 billion won out of 9 billion won of sales proceeds."

"And then, he gave another 2 billion won to each of his sons from his second wife."

"Okay, then he is left with 1 billion won. Did he give it to his second wife?"

"That's right. The condo which he is living in with his second wife is worth 2 billion won, and he gave that condo with the cash of 1 billion won to his second wife."

"So, President Park didn't take any for himself. He hasn't even passed away yet."

"You have to hear the full story to say anything further. President Park actually had paid off some of the loans even before he sold the building. He had paid off a 5 billion won loan to Kukmin Bank. So he took 5 billion won from the building's sales proceeds without letting anyone know about it. Moreover, he had reduced some of the tenants' security deposit by raising their monthly rent, but when he told his children about the security deposits, he gave them the original amount of security deposits before the change took place. Consequently, he took some money from there too without letting his children know about it. Therefore, he took a total of 7 billion won to his pocket from the building sale,

and no one including his children knows about this."

"Really?"

"Do you know what he told his children after distributing the building's sales proceeds?"

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'I gave you all I have and I have nothing left in my hand. So you will have to give me an allowance money like on a monthly basis.' He is cunning like a snake."

"He is incredible."

"I think we lost this game, President Goo."

"No, don't say that. Even though I paid a little bit high for the price of this building, I don't think I can easily find a building like this. I can see the entire Sinsa Town in Gangnam District from my office on the 19th floor. I am satisfied with the building."

"Someone who knows how to feel satisfied is a truly rich man. So you are indeed a rich man."

"Haha. Thank you, sir."

Suwon District Court sent a notification to GH Mobile about the trial with the date of the trial. The internal auditor brought the notice to Gun-Ho.

"We have the date of trial now. We will have to be at the court next Thursday at 11 am. They asked us to come to Suwon District Court no. 205."

"Can someone else attend the court on behalf of me?"

"Yes, but it would look better if you, as the president of GH Mobile show up to the court. It would make you look reasonable, and they would think you're taking this seriously."

"Hmm..."

"I will send our response to the court within the date given to us. The judge will take a look at it and take it into consideration."

"What does our response say?"

"We will include the fact about our court receivership during Mulpasaneop and about the new owner's takeover of the company and also the fact that we paid off the unpaid wages and some loans. Also, we will talk about us consistently making payments towards our debt according to our installment payment plan, which was agreed with our creditors."

"Then, the court will dismiss the plaintiff's request?"

"Yes, sir."

"What outcome are you expecting from the trial?"

"I don't know, sir. It's up to the judge, right?"

"What if we don't like the court's decision?"

"We will have to appeal to the higher court."

Gun-Ho thought about it for a second.

'If we appeal to the higher court, then Seongil Polymer wouldn't be able to do anything to our company until we get the decision from that higher court.'

Gun-Ho had enough cash in his bank account to pay off the 300 million won debt to Seongil Polymer, but he didn't want to do that.

'Well, this can be a very useful experience for me. I can learn some legal stuff.'

It was the day of trial. Gun-Ho went to Suwon District Court himself. It was located in Woncheon Town, Youngtong District in Suwon City.

On the door of the no. 205 courtroom, there was a list of case numbers along with the names of the plaintiff and defendant by the order of time scheduled.

Gun-Ho went into the courtroom when it was his scheduled time. While he was sitting at the courtroom, the judge called his name and Seongil Polymer's

president's name.

"Plaintiff, Seongil Polymer's president Sang-Gi Kim."

The judge called his name twice, but he didn't appear at the courtroom. The judge then called Gun-Ho's name.

"Defendant, GH Mobile's president Gun-Ho Goo."

"Yes."

The court staff verified Gun-Ho's ID to see if Gun-Ho was the person who he claimed to be.

The judge said, "The plaintiff didn't show up, so we will postpone the trial."

That was it.

"Why did Seongil Polymer's president didn't show up? Did he forget the trial date?"

Gun-Ho walked around the Gwanggyo area and thought about where he wanted to head to.

"Do I want to go to my GH Building in Sinsa Town, Seoul? Or to GH Mobile in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City?"

After thinking for a while, Gun-Ho decided to drive to Jiksan Town in Cheonan City.

248 Hiring New Workers for GH Development 1 – PART 1

The Seongil Polymer's president started agonizing.

"It is certainly nice to be able to sell more products to Egnopak. We are now selling 400 million won worth of products to Egnopak rather than 300 million won. But I will lose another major customer—GH Mobile for this."

The president of Seongil Polymer went to see the Egnopak's president.

"I filed a lawsuit against GH Mobile as you asked. You will have to order an additional 100 million won worth of products from us as you promised."

"Okay, I will do that. But I will do that when you receive the payment order from the court."

"I will lose one of our major customers—GH Mobile because I am helping you, sir."

"Don't worry about it. The amount of the products you are selling to GH Mobile is only 100 million won, right? Our company will cover it for you."

"The problem is that President Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile is spreading a bad rumor about our company as they terminated the business relationship with us."

"What kind of rumor?"

"They are saying that they terminated the business with us because our products were defective and they are saying that they found foreign substances in our products. Also, they say that our product cost is unreasonably high."

"He is indeed vicious."

The president of Egnopak called for the company's in-house attorney. Because Egnopak was a large company, they had an in-house legal department and an attorney. The in-house attorney was leading the in-house legal department of

Egnopak.

"I asked the Seongil Polymer's president to let us know right away once he receives a court order for the payment from GH Mobile."

"That's good."

"But the thing is... what if that Gun-Ho Goo person pays off the 300 million won debt as soon as they receive the payment order from the court? He seems to have a lot of money in cash, and he recently purchased a high-rise huge building in Gangnam."

"Well, if President Gun-Ho Goo pays off the debt to Seongil Polymer, then Seongil Polymer's president should tell that to everybody."

"Tell it to everyone?"

"Yes, he should."

"What for? Ohhh, so other creditor companies become aware of that fact."

"That's right. GH Mobile still has several creditor companies. Once they learn about GH Mobile's paying off the debt to Seongil Polymer, all of the other creditors will ask GH Mobile to pay off their debts too."

"Well, the people who graduate from law school are indeed smart people, just like you."

"If GH Mobile can't pay the debt after the court ordered the payment, Seongil Polymer will have to start collecting process immediately."

"So, they can seize GH Mobile's equipment or automobile, right?"

"Well, we want to focus on their accounts receivable from their major customers like S Group. That way, we can damage GH Mobile's reputation. It will also plant some bad images to S Group about GH Mobile."

"So we can reduce GH Mobile's business."

"That's right. Their customer companies would think GH Mobile has some

problems with their financial system and would want to reduce their business with GH Mobile."

"You are so smart. Your LEET (Legal Education Eligibility Test) score when you were admitted to the law school was 130, right?"

"It was actually 140, sir."

"Oh, was it? Hahaha."

"Well, we still have to consider that GH will respond to all things that would happen around them with a smart move."

"What would they do?"

"They have highly educated and smart workers too and President Gun-Ho Goo is a self-made successful man. He won't be easy to defeat. I've reviewed a copy of their response to the court. I believe they are trying to buy some time."

"Hmm."

"I think they will drag this case to the higher court."

The president of Egnopak seemed to feel very uncomfortable knowing that Gun-Ho probably had a good tactic.

"Okay. You are dismissed."

"Yes, sir."

The in-house attorney who graduated from a law school gave a deep bow to the Egnopak's president before leaving his office.

When Egnopak's president was looking for all the ways that he could think of to distress Gun-Ho, he received a call from the U.S. It was from his son who was running Egnopak's factory in California.

"Is that Gun-Ho something person from GH Mobile still bothering you, dad?"

"I had set up everything to start a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, and that son of b*tch appeared from nowhere and intercepted it. I am so still upset about

it."

"Did you ask that Seongil Polymer company to file a lawsuit against them? I told you that when I was in Korea last time. What happened?"

"They did, but it seems like it would take a long time."

"I think I'd better come to Korea to teach him a lesson."

"I want to kick him in his belly if I could."

"Don't worry about it, dad. Even though I graduated from USC (University of Southern California), I still have a lot of friends in Gangnam, Seoul."

"We should refrain from using any physical violence. That could backfire."

"Don't worry about it, dad."

"You think about it, son. Don't you remember the time when I wielded my baseball bat at a bar? I wielded it because you were being insulted there."

"I was too young at that time, but now I am in control of those people. They will lick my feet if I ask them to do so."

"Well, just don't do it. We will have to think about it another way, something smart."

"I am coming to Korea next week. I will see you then, dad."

Gun-Ho went to work at the GH Building in Sinsa Town, Seoul two times per week and went to GH Mobile's factory in Jiksan Town, three days per week.

Gun-Ho was having a cup of coffee at his office in Jiksan Town while reviewing papers that he had to approve when he received a call from Manager Kang of GH Development.

"Sir, umm... We received the applications for the jobs of a secretary and a staff in the accounting team. There are so many of them."

"How many applications did you receive?"

"I actually posted on WorkNet only, but other job posting websites and job exam websites posted it without asking us. We received 750 applications for the secretary position alone and 320 applications for the accounting staff position even though we stated work experience in a related field as a requirement."

"Did you post the job opening with GH Development Company's name only?"

"Well... that was..."

"Did you put GH Mobile or GH Media in the job posting?"

"I'm sorry, sir. I think I misunderstood your intention. I actually listed all three companies' names."

The job posting that Manager Kang placed on WorkNet was like this,

[We are hiring for staff due to our company's expansion.

Secretary — 0

(A four-year college graduate who can speak English fluently)

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Accounting Staff — 0

(A four-year college graduate who has more than five years of work experience in the related field.)

Documents to be submitted—Resume, Self-Introduction Essay, Language Skill Proof (for

those who are applying for a secretary position), Accounting Related Qualification Proof (for those who are applying for an accounting staff position)

Address to send the application package—GH Development, 19th Floor at GH Building,

Sinsa Town, Gangnam District, Seoul City

Attn: Ji-Young Jeong (General Affairs Dept.)

By GH Development Company

GH Mobile Company

GH Media Company

GH Parts Company Suzhou City in China]

249 Hiring New Workers for GH Development 1 – PART 2

Gun-Ho felt annoyed. But those applications couldn't just be ignored.

"I don't have time to review all those applications. I will send the general affairs manager of GH Mobile there, instead. You and the GH Mobile's general affairs manager will have to review all of the applications and select three people among them."

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"Mr. General Affairs Manager, you will have to go on a short trip to Seoul the day after tomorrow."

"Huh? Where to Seoul?"

"Go to GH Building that is located in Sinsa Town, Gangnam. Once you get there, go up to the 19th floor, then you will see an office—GH Development. And talk to Manager Kang there."

"Yes, sir. What do you want me to do there?"

"We are hiring a secretary and an accounting staff for GH Development, but our job posting listed all of our four companies' names including our factory in China by mistake. As a result, we have received way too many applications for those two openings. So, I want you to review the applications we received and do the first interview. Conduct the hiring process with Manager Kang at GH Development."

"How many people applied for the positions?"

"We have 750 for the secretary position, and 320 for the accounting staff position."

"Wow. We did actually received a lot. Manager Kang and I will be the first to select twenty candidates based on papers, and then select five for each position for a final interview. I will prepare the final interview for you to conduct, sir."

"Five people are still too many. Make three for the final interview."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho didn't work on Saturdays and Sundays.

Many organizations where Gun-Ho belonged to, such as local organizations or some economic organizations for businessmen often held a friendship golf tournament. Gun-Ho didn't attend any of them though because he didn't see himself fitting in those groups. At first, the members of those groups were too noisy. They often raised their voices and they also seemed to be shameless. They didn't even try to restrain themselves from stating inappropriate words that could be considered even as sexual harassment. Some of them were self-made business owners, but most of them were born into a wealthy family and inherited their businesses from their families.

"We'd love to have you at our golf tournament. We need more members who are young like you, President Goo."

"I'm sorry. I'm just not a good golf player."

"You don't just play golf here. This is also all about business and friendship. We make connections for our business, and you can learn important information too. We do find customer and vendor companies here too, not to mention that this is a very good exercise for your health."

"I totally understand, but I have an important appointment today..."

"It seems that President Goo has other good organizations he is attending to. By the way, I've passed by President Goo's factory the other day, and it looked really nice."

Gun-Ho sometimes went to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel and enjoyed their food

and took the hot spring bath there. It became a bit more distant to drive there since his company moved to Jiksan Town from Asan City, but he still went there pretty often.

Gun-Ho was thinking that day that he wanted to go to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel again as usual to have his lunch and enjoy the hot spring bath, and then he had a second thought.

"Maybe I don't have to eat inside the hotel. Maybe I want to eat somewhere else today. What about Bibimbap* in the Youngiksan area?"

Gun-Ho was walking towards his car in the parking lot while thinking of where to have his lunch that day, when he saw a young couple who were having a conversation while standing at the parking lot.

"Huh? Jong-Suk?"

"Huh? Bro!"

"I thought you went to Incheon City today since it is Sunday. What are you doing here?"

Gun-Ho glanced at the girl who was standing next to Jong-Suk while talking to him.

"Oh, umm. This is our company's president."

"Hello, sir."

The girl had a fair skin and she was wearing glasses. She looked elegant, and she was pretty when she smiled.

"Who is she? Oh, this is the girl who is attending Polytechnics College with you..."

"Haha. Yeah, this is she."

"Oh, I see. I heard you have someone close to you at school, but what a surprise. It is really good to see you here with the girl."

The girl seemed to be a bit shy. Gun-Ho thought that the girl looked to be a very nice person.

'She seems to be calm and stable. She is a perfect fit for Jong-Suk who is a bit tough.'

"You two haven't had lunch yet, right? Why don't you join me for lunch today? I will treat you."

"Oh, umm..."

"Don't say anything. Just come with me!"

Gun-Ho took the couple to a Korean restaurant in a hotel, where they could enjoy the Korean table d'hote. Gun-Ho ordered all kinds of Korean food in addition to beer.

"Oh, bro! Don't order too much."

"It's okay. I want to. This is the first meal I'm having with my future sister-in-law."

The girl seemed to be frightened when she heard Gun-Ho mentioning her as his sister-in-law, while Jong-Suk seemed to be happy with Gun-Ho's choice of words because he was smiling.

The girl placed pieces of delicious food on the plate in front of Gun-Ho whenever a new delicious dish came out to their table.

"No, it's okay. You don't have to do it. I will take care of myself. You can do that to the man who is sitting next to you."

Jong-Suk asked the girl while chewing the meat.

"My boss is a really good person, don't you think?"

"Yes, I think so. By the way, why do you talk to your boss in an informal way sometimes, Jong-Suk?"

Gun-Ho smiled and said,

"Manager Park and I, we are like real brothers. We grew up in the same town and worked together at a facto..."

At the very moment, Jong-Suk Park kicked Gun-Ho's shin under the table when Gun-Ho was about to tell the girl about the days they were worked at a factory together.

"I was so surprised when I saw you, sir. I was actually expecting to see an old man when I heard of you as the president of the company where Jong-Suk is working at. The president of the company where I am working is actually 60 something years old."

"Oh, that's right. I heard you are working at a factory in an industrial complex. How's your company doing?"

"It's doing well."

"I heard that you are working at a research center. Did I hear right?"

"Yes, that's true. I actually used to work in a product quality control team before I joined the research center. Since I majored in a field that is totally unrelated to the product we are manufacturing, I am having a hard time learning new things at work."

The girl laughed as she talked about her work. She looked really pretty when she laughed.

Gun-Ho looked at the couple who was sitting in front of him. They looked really nice together.

Note*

Bibimbap – Cooked rice with various vegetables and meat mixed together with Korean red chili paste.

250 Hiring New Workers for GH Development 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho received an email from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

She sent a list of five books to be published. She included in the list—the book titles, the number of pages of each book—the name of authors, etc. She also mentioned that two translators were working on translating these books into the Korean language because the work would be too much for one translator to handle.

At the end of her email, she added,

"There is a series of cartoons about world history which is very popular in amazon.com in the U.S. It is composed of thirty books. I'd like to publish this series in Korea, and I'd like to know what you think.

We are using the initial investment funds of 300 million won in publishing our first five books and another five books that we will publish, and also in operating our publishing company.

If we decide to publish the series of world history cartoons that I just mentioned, we will need an additional 300 million won. We will have to use over 3-degree color for these cartoon books and there are thirty of them. Of course, it's not like we have to publish this series, but I believe it is a good series of books.

I want to start working on this cartoon series as soon as possible before another publishing company takes it. Since this is cartoon books, it's hard to fail and to sell. I'm sure it will succeed.

From President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media."

Gun-Ho replied to the email,

"Dear President Jeong-Sook Shin, I will send you an additional investment fund of 300 million won as you requested. However, I will not increase capital.

Instead, record it as I am working at your publishing company as a managing director. You can determine my salary in the range between your salary and the chief editor's salary. Once Four Major Public Insurance is filed for me, I will send 300 million won. You can record the money as you received it from GH Media's Managing Director, Gun-Ho Goo."

Gun-Ho was receiving his salary from three different companies. He was receiving 3 million won from GH Media, 15 million won from GH Development, and another 15 million won from GH Mobile. His monthly salary in total was 33 million won. Gun-Ho was subject to the aggregate income tax. But, since he was the sole owner of all three companies, as long as those companies were doing good, he was getting his dividends for 100%.

Gun-Ho sent 300 million won to GH Media, and President Jeong-Sook Shin made a contract with a publishing company in the U.S. for the cartoon series. The news traveled fast among the people in the publishing industry, and people started talking about GH Media.

"I heard there is a huge company behind, which is supporting President Jeong-Sook Shin."

"We shouldn't compete with President Jeong-Sook Shin. We can't win because we can't find that much investment funds."

"How did she get connected with that kind of big company?"

"That's why she was known as the hand of Midas in the publishing industry."

The architect office in the U.S. sent the design drawing to GH Mobile's office, along with the aerial view of the new factory. Gun-Ho was not an expert in this area, but the aerial view of his new factory that he would build looked so great.

"Director Yoon, can you make a clean copy of this?"

"Of course."

"Can you then make a copy of this and send it to the vice president of Lymondell Dyeon—Mr. Brandon Burke?"

"Oh, this? Sure. I will do that."

"We will have to include a letter with a copy of the design drawing and aerial view. Do you remember the interpreter who worked for us when Mr. Brandon Burke visited us last time?"

"Oh, yes, I remember him. The one who used to work as a branch manager in the U.S. Mr. Lee, I believe."

"Contact him and have him write a letter to Mr. Brandon Burke, saying that we are sending a copy of our new factory's design drawings and its aerial view, and we are ready to build a factory. Also, tell him that we'd like to make an official contract in the near future."

"Yes, sir. I will contact the interpreter immediately."

Director Yoon who was in charge of construction in GH Mobile sent a letter along with a copy of the factory's design drawings and aerial view to Mr. Brandon Burke who was the vice president of Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle, via EMS.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Manager Seong-il Kang at GH Development. He said that they narrowed down to three final candidates for each position of a secretary and accounting staff, so they were ready for Gun-Ho to conduct the final interview.

"Sir, will you be available next Tuesday for the final interview?"

"Tuesday is not good. I have a meeting with the vendors and customers held in S Group. What about Wednesday?"

"I will set up the interview on Wednesday at 11 am then."

"Sounds good."

S Group hosted a meeting with vendors and customers in their headquarters in Samsung Town, Seoul. Many first vendor companies attended the meeting and many of them were big companies. Gun-Ho was one of them. When the meeting was almost over, someone came to the S Group's president and whispered into his ear,

"What? Our chairman is here?"

There were about 20 presidents of the vendor companies in the meeting, and the S Group's president said to them,

"Our chairman is here and he wants to talk with you all. Please stand up and clap when our chairman enters the meeting room, to welcome him."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The chairman of S Group was the owner of the S Group and he was an extremely wealthy man. Gun-Ho had never met him before.

"Our chairman is coming."

A man who seemed to be a secretary announced with a loud voice and the S Group's president quickly stood up. All of the 20 vendor companies' presidents stood up along with him.

The S Group's chairman entered the meeting room. He looked like he was in his 70s. He looked much younger in a picture on a newspaper though, Gun-Ho thought. But in person, he looked really old with a lot of age spots on his face. He certainly looked like a 70-something years old man.

"I am pleased to meet you all. As a matter of fact, without you all, our S Group will have to close our business. Don't you think? Mr. President?"

The S Group's chairman said to S Group's president. The president responded quickly and with a loud voice,

"Of course, sir."

"All we need from you is manufacturing good products. You just need to manufacture better products than the ones made in Japan or in the U.S. People say in Japan that they do 'Isshokenmei.'"

Gun-Ho was surprised by hearing it again because that's what the Japanese Engineer Mr. Sakata Ikuzo said before.

'Mr. Sakata Ikuzo even chewed a piece of plastic in order to taste the product that he was developing. The plastic contains carbon and sulfur, and he still put it into

his mouth knowing the fact.'

The S Group's chairman seemed to be amused for some reason; he was smiling.

"Anyone of you knows what 'Isshokenmei' means?"

No one responded, and the Gun-Ho answered,

"That means a person risks his life to do something."

"That's correct. Let me see... You seem to be very young. Which company are you representing?"

"It's GH Mobile."

"Oh, I see. So, as the president of GH Mobile just said, I want you all to work so hard in developing good products to the extent that you risk your life. I believe that GH Mobile's president is doing so in developing their own products."

251 Hiring New Workers for GH

Development 2 – PART 2

The chairman then spent some time to hear some other companies' president; they mostly commented or suggested something they found necessary in doing business together.

"This is a rare opportunity for us all to get together like this. Let's have lunch together."

The chairman took the participating presidents to a ginseng chicken soup restaurant that was situated near the S Group.

The chairman was a bit overweight and he seemed to know how to enjoy food. Even with his age of 70, he ate chicken bone too by chewing it with his teeth. The chairman filled the presidents' glasses with liquor. They were drinking soju which was inexpensive and popular in Korea. The S Group's chairman was one of the top five richest men in Korea and he was surprisingly easygoing. Gun-Ho was told that the chairman's favorite food was Jajjangmyeon* and he sometimes enjoyed a ginseng chicken soup on a special occasion.

"He is indeed a tycoon."

The chairman looked at Gun-Ho. It seemed that he remembered Gun-Ho by Gun-Ho's answering his question earlier.

"What did you say your company name was? It was GH something."

"It's GH Mobile, sir."

"Since you are a very young president, you are probably working so hard in expanding your company. Please let me fill up your glass with liquor."

"Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho held his glass with two hands to show his respect.

The S Group's president who was following around the chairman while carrying a bottle of soju said to the chairman,

"He is the one who acquired Mulpasaneop recently. His company developed our new product as well."

"Oh, really?"

The chairman tapped Gun-Ho's back with his thick hand.

After the meeting held by the S Group, Gun-Ho headed back to his TowerPalace condo in Dogok Town. Tomorrow was the interview day for the new employees of GH Development, so he decided not to return to Jiksan Town, Cheonan City but he would stay in Seoul. Gun-Ho was having a fruit while watching TV when he received a call from an unknown number.

"Is it a spam call or an advertisement?"

He answered the call,

"Hello?"

"Umm, are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, I am. Who am I speaking with?"

"Umm... I am the manager of BM Entertainment Management."

"BM Entertainment Management?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Yes. We actually have met in Shanghai before, when we were waiting for the director of the bureau of cultural affairs and radio broadcasting, film, and television."

"Oh, oh, I think I remember that. What made you call me though?"

"I'd like to meet with you, sir. You gave me your business card back then, and your company address is Jiksan Town in Cheonan City..."

"Why don't you tell me on the phone instead?"

"No, I really like to meet you in person, sir."

"Then, can you come to Sinsa Town in Gangnam District tomorrow? I will be in Seoul tomorrow."

"Sinsa Town? Where should I go in Sinsa Town?"

"You can come to GH Building on the 19th floor. It's GH Development. You will find the building at the entrance of Garosugil Road."

"GH Building? Okay, I will be there tomorrow."

The next morning, Gun-Ho went to GH Building in Sinsa Town. It seemed that his office was just cleaned up, maybe because the cleaning crew heard that their president was coming that day. Gun-Ho could see some moisture on the sofa.

When Gun-Ho arrived at the building, the security guard in a uniform ran to the entrance and greeted Gun-Ho. He held the elevator for him as well. When Gun-Ho entered his office, there were Manager Seong-il Kang and Team Leader Soo-Nam Jeong waiting for him.

"Team Leader Jeong is here too."

"Yes. I heard you are coming to the office today and I had to come to say hello to you, sir."

Gun-Ho received a brief report from Manager Kang.

"The interview will be held at 11 am today, right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Am I expecting to see three candidates for each position?"

"That's right, sir."

"Manager Kang, please prepare an envelope with 50,000 won in it for each interviewee who will be coming today, so they can use it for their transportation expense."

"Okay, sir. Will do that."

Gun-Ho was sitting at his office by himself and reviewing the application packets of the final six candidates. They were all highly qualified people.

"If I was one of the candidates for the position, I wouldn't have been able to compete with these people."

Gun-Ho first thoroughly reviewed the application packets of the three candidates for the accounting staff position. They all had the computerized accounting level-1 certificate, not to mention all sorts of finance-related certificates. One of them had a tax accountant license. And one of them used to work in a foreign branch office of a financial institution and could speak English fluently.

Gun-Ho then looked at the three candidate's job applications for the secretary position. They all had TOEIC (Test Of English for International Communication) scores exceeding 950. By looking at their pictures on the job application form, they were all very good looking people. One of them graduated from college abroad.

"All of them are better qualified than me. Who am I going to select?"

Gun-Ho gave a hollow smile.

"We have only one open position for the secretary job, and 750 people applied for it. The person we will hire will win in a competition 750:1. It's much harder than becoming an actor or actress, I guess. Is it really that hard to get a job in Korea right now?"

Gun-Ho leaned back in his chair.

"749 people who wouldn't get a job today with my company will apply for another job somewhere. They all had a very good qualification at a similar level. They will be very disappointed and they would feel nervous and anxious about getting old without having a job for a while. Egnopak's president's son would know what it feels like? Mulpasaneop's president— Se-Young Oh's son would have had this sort of experience in his life?"

Gun-Ho looked at clouds outside the window. The clouds were flowing in the direction of the wind.

"However, these people who are applying for a job in Sinsa Dong, Gangnam are in a better situation than the one I used to be in. I mostly looked for a job in a province and had a job interview here and there for a small factory job. And I lived in a tiny OneRoom."

Gun-Ho closed the job application file.

"Our government is encouraging young people to start their own business. However, I think they'd better stay unemployed rather than starting a business even though that will worry their parents. Starting and running their own business is not easy at all, and if they fail and go bankrupt, they would become a person with a bad credit score. Once they stay that way with a bad credit score, there wouldn't be many things that they can do. At first, a bank will ignore them. Look at the Jae-Sik Moon's case. He is an intelligent man but once he became a person with a bad score, people considered him as he was a swindler who deceived his friends from high school. That's our current society."

Gun-Ho sipped his cup of green tea.

"If I hadn't touched the YS Tech company's money for a few days, what would I have been doing now? If Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town was not cruel enough to take the debtor's pot when he was young and still working as a hard money lender, he wouldn't have become the current Chairman Lee as he is now."

Gun-Ho's eyes suddenly welled up with tears.

"Okay. Throw your stone to me—Gun-Ho Goo or Chairman Lee in Cheongdam Town if you want. I would yell that this was the only way I could go as a person who was born into a poor family."

Gun-Ho closed his eyes.

Note*

Jajjangmyeon – Korean-style Chinese noodle dish with black bean sauce, vegetables, and diced pork.

252 Hiring New Workers for GH

Development 3 – PART 1

The final interview for the accounting staff position had begun.

Gun-Ho asked all three candidates to come to the meeting room altogether. Three job applicants seemed to be quite nervous. They sat at the table facing Gun-Ho.

"I've reviewed your applications. You are all highly qualified, and I am in a very difficult position because I have to select only one of you."

Gun-Ho tried to make the applicants feel comfortable and ease their tension. He didn't even ask about their certificates or academics degree because those things were already shown in their resumes.

"How long have you worked for your previous employer?"

"What was the nature of your job?"

Gun-Ho asked the candidates mostly about their work experience. Since the job posting required work experience to be able to apply for the position, the applicants with work experience were not very young people.

After the interview was over, Manager Kang handed out an envelope to each interviewee with 50,000 won in it to help with their transportation expense. This was their final interview. After the first interview was done, they were given an envelope with 30,000 won in it.

A lady applicant in a black two-piece business suit said,

"The president is very young. He seems to be easygoing as well."

Manager Kang smiled in response to her comment.

Another final interview ensued for the secretary position. Three lady candidates entered the interview room. They were all younger and prettier than the ones for

the accounting staff position. Gun-Ho began to talk with a smile,

"All of you have a high score in TOEIC; they were exceeding 950. Two of you graduated at Daewon Foreign Language High School and studied further abroad. One of you went to high school in another country. I am in a very difficult position to select only one of you since you are all highly qualified people."

The three candidates looked at Gun-Ho's face; they all looked nervous and anxious.

"Can each of you say this in English? 'Our company is manufacturing extruded products with urethane synthetic rubber.'"

Each candidate spoke the same sentence that Gun-Ho gave in English. They all had a nice voice.

Gun-Ho looked at each of the candidates to see who had a positive facial expression when they spoke in English.

"Thank you for coming today. I hope I can see you soon."

Gun-Ho said with a smile. The ladies gave him a 90-degree bow before leaving the office. Manager Seong-Il Kang distributed the envelope with 50,000 won in it to these interviewees as well.

Gun-Ho asked for Manager Seong-Il Kang.

"I've made my decision. Please send the job offer letter to them."

"Who did you select, sir?"

"For the accounting staff position, we will offer the job to the second candidate who had a six-year work experience at an electronics company and who also had a tax accountant license."

"You made an excellent choice, sir. I think that person will fit the position as well."

"For the secretary position, we will hire the first candidate who graduated from Daewon Foreign Language High School and who studied abroad. She is living in

the Hyundai condo in Apgujeong Town, which is close to our company. I like her voice; it's very sweet."

"Yes, sir. I will send out the offer letter to those two people."

"Today is Wednesday, right? Ask them to start working next Monday. Give the accounting staff a manager position. That person has six years of work experience with a tax accountant license, and his position with his previous employer was a manager as well."

"Yes, sir. Do you think this will bother Ms. Ji-Young Jeong? She might think it's not fair if we give the manager position to the new employee?"

"She should be fine. The new employee is four years older than her. Moreover, that person has a tax accountant license. She will understand."

"Okay, sir. I will proceed as you instructed."

Gun-Ho had lunch with Manager Kang, Ms. Ji-Young Jeong, and Team Leader Jeong-Soo Nam that day.

"I was told that you have two children, Mr. Jeong-Soo Nam."

"That's right. I have two daughters. My first kid is in junior high, and the second is a sixth-grader in elementary school."

"They are three years apart? They probably get along fine then."

"Well, not really. They fight all the time. It's their routine."

"What about your spouse? Is she working as well?"

"She used to. Since my second child was injured, she stays at home now and spends more time with her."

"Oh, sorry to hear that. Was it serious?"

"She fell while playing somewhere high. It took several months to completely heal. My wife used to work at an insurance company, and she didn't like her job. She said she doesn't have the right aptitude for it. She is now actively

participating in our residential community. She is working as a managing member of the community."

"Managing member of the community?"

Manager Kang responded to Gun-Ho's surprise instead.

"Many women now take the position as a managing member of their residential community these days. It is sort of competitive to get the position."

"Really? I thought a senior male member of the community usually takes that kind of position."

"It used to be, but not anymore."

"Oh, by the way, how is Manager Jong-Suk Park doing?"

"He is doing great. He has a girlfriend now. He is very busy."

"Oh, I see. What is his girlfriend doing for a living?"

Ms. Ji-Young Jeong asked; she looked curious.

"She is working at a research center in an electronics company in Cheonan City. They met at the Polytechnics College. They are both taking evening classes provided to working adults."

Team Leader Jeong said,

"Manager Park is manly and easygoing. When I was doing military service at Army Special Warfare Command, I had never lost to anybody in an arm wrestling, but Manager Park beat me. I've never seen a man with that strong arm, not to mention his skills."

"That's why he is the manager of the technical department."

"Oh, that's why... hahaha."

After lunch and after he came back to his office, Gun-Ho had the coffee that Ms. Ji-Young Jeong prepared for him. He was dozing off in his office when he heard someone knocking on the door.

"Umm, sir. Someone is here to see you."

"Who is it?"

"He said he is from BM Entertainment Management."

"Oh, that's right. Please let him through."

The dandy looking man—the manager of BM Entertainment Management—came into Gun-Ho's office. He was not alone, but he was with a man who looked like he was in his late 20s, and he had his hair dyed in yellow. The new guy was tall, and he was wearing an earring on his left ear.

"Hello, it's really good to see you again, sir, since we met in Shanghai."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Please have a seat. What brought you here to see me?"

"Oh, this man here is the leader of the popular group, Bomb. His name is Seong-Hoon."

BM Entertainment's manager introduced the man with yellow hair to Gun-Ho.

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho looked at this Seong-Hoon person. He seemed that he was wearing a subtle make-up. He had a very pretty face like a girl, but he was not Gun-Ho's type.

'That sh*tty man is wearing a makeup.'

253 Hiring New Workers for GH

Development 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho was thinking about how he disliked the fact that a man wore make-up; that entertainment company's manager continued to talk,

"I thought you were running a manufacturing company, sir. That's what I read from your business card. Did I misunderstand?"

"You are correct. I spend half of my week in the manufacturing company in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City, and I stay here in this building for the remaining half of the week."

"I saw the sign on the office door on our way here. It says GH Development. Is it the management company of this building?"

"You can say that. Let's not talk about me anymore. Let's talk about why you are here to see me."

"We couldn't do our performance in the fall of last year in Shanghai. Our management company planned the event. It was a shame."

"I see."

"So I want to try it again in the spring of this year in Shanghai. You and the director of the bureau of cultural affairs and art—Seukang Li—are close. I am here to ask you to help us get permission to do the performance there."

"China has its own policy and regulation. It's not something I can help you with. I have nothing further to talk with you about."

"China values personal connections, and they are very powerful since they make things work. We will pay you for it, sir. It is for the benefits of our country too."

"Director Li is not those types of person, who would do something because he gets paid."

"Sir, please help us."

"I already told you it's not something I can help you with."

Gun-Ho sounded annoyed, and the entertainment company's manager couldn't ask a favor again.

"If you happen to have a chance to talk to him, please consider talking about our situation. It's like an exporting service to China. We will make money there, and that gives benefits to our country."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The entertainment company's manager and the young man with one earring walked out of Gun-Ho's office.

When Gun-Ho came back to the factory in Jiksan Town, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo entered Gun-Ho's office with the interpreter.

"It's almost time for me to go back to my country. I wanted to say goodbye to you yesterday, sir, but you were not here."

"Oh, time flies."

"Manager Park now can handle the product manufacturing and simple machine repairing work on his own."

"I was feeling confident when you were here with us, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. We will miss you. The internal auditor will give you your incentive tomorrow for the successful new product development. We truly appreciate your hard work here."

"Thank you."

"Once you reserve your flight, please let me know. I want to have dinner with you and with the workers here who worked with you."

"Thank you, sir."

Gun-Ho received a letter from Mr. Brandon Burke—the vice president of

Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle. Gun-Ho asked the new secretary who he hired a few days ago to translate the letter. The secretary translated the letter immediately and sent it to Gun-Ho via Kakaotalk.

[Our company's foreign investment committee decided to start a joint venture with GH Mobile in Korea. We will arrange a meeting with GH Mobile to sign the official contract on the 26th of this month. Please have the GH Mobile's president and the person in charge come to our company in Seattle.]

"She is so quick. It's very convenient to have a secretary who can speak English."

Gun-Ho gave a call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim at Kim & Jeong Law Office.

"Hey, we received the letter."

"What letter?"

"The letter from Lymondell Dyeon. They said they will start a joint venture with us, and they are asking us to come to Seattle to make a contract."

"Really? Congratulations."

Gun-Ho convened a provisional meeting to share the news with the directors and managers of GH Mobile.

"We finally received a letter from Lymondell Dyeon to make a contract for a joint venture."

"Wow. So we are really doing it."

They all seemed delighted.

Gun-Ho showed the letter that was written in English to them. Director Yoon started reading the letter thoroughly.

"Director Yoon, let's get the infrastructure construction work on our land in Asan City started. We will have to find a construction company to build our factory too."

"One second, sir."

The internal auditor stopped Gun-Ho.

"Before we sign on the actual contract, we shouldn't start building the factory. The cost for the infrastructure construction work has to be borne by the joint venture once it is established. If we start the construction now, GH Mobile will have to bear the cost."

"Hmm. That makes sense. Okay, then, Director Yoon, why don't you get some price quotes for the construction? I will go to a bank and see if I can get a loan for the factory construction."

"Maybe we should talk with our major bank—Gangnam bank in Seoul?"

"We already have a huge loan with Gangnam Bank. I will talk with a local bank in Asan City if they are willing to lend some funds to us."

"Sounds good, sir."

"Also, I think maybe we want to get a new appraisal for our factory in Jiksan Town."

"We already have it, sir."

"That's not for our new factory though. I believe the appraised value should be different now since we built a new factory here."

"Oh, so you want to get a higher appraisal and get a loan based on the new appraised value."

"Exactly."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Min-Hyeok Kim in China.

"We will start a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon."

"Really? So it is confirmed."

"They want to make a contract on the 26th of this month."

"That's nice. Our storage is empty now. I want to pile up our products there as soon as possible and sell them in China, nationwide."

"Haha. You will soon be able to do that."

"Did your parents visit you in China already?"

"Yeah. They went back to Korea last week."

"How was the meeting with your fiancée's parents?"

"It was good. We had the meeting at a hotel. If we were in Korea, we would have to meet in a restaurant, but I managed to do it in a hotel because we are in China."

"Were your parents satisfied?"

"Both parents were happy. My wife studied in the U.S., and her parents are artists. My parents loved them. My father was a bus driver. I wouldn't be able to meet someone like her if I was in Korea."

"Right. People in Korea prefer for their child to meet someone with a similar family background. Well, congratulations, Min-Hyeok. It's really nice that both parents were content."

"Yeah. Thank you."

It was Saturday. Gun-Ho didn't go to Seoul, but he stayed in Onyang Town and enjoyed a hot spring bath in Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. After the hot spring bath, he wanted to have some cold beer.

"I want a company to enjoy beer today. Maybe I should call Jong-Suk. Even though it's Saturday, he is probably at work. He usually stays there on Saturday morning."

Gun-Ho called Manager Jong-Suk Park.

"Jong-Suk? It's me. When are you going to Seoul?"

"Tomorrow. I am still in Jiksan Town. I have to repair the extruding machine in

no. 4 line."

"Okay. When you are done, come to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. Let's have some beer together."

Jong-Suk Park came to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel around 5 pm. He was still wearing the company uniform. He probably came straight from work.

"Did you repair the machine?"

"Yeah."

"You are not going to Incheon City to see your parents?"

"The traffic is so heavy on Saturdays. I will probably leave for Incheon City tomorrow morning."

"Oh, I see."

"I'm going to have a cigarette. I will be back."

"Let's go together. Let me have one too."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk walked out of Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. When Jong-Suk took out a pack of cigarettes, several men that looked like gangsters surrounded Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk.

254 Lynch 1 – PART 1

The gangsters were about seven to eight people. Some of them were carrying a club. One man came forward in front of Gun-Ho. He looked like the leader of the gangster.

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, I am. Do I know you?"

"You are creating too much noise these days."

"What? Who are you?"

"The one in a business suit is Gun-Ho Goo. Beat him up!"

The group of men started beating Gun-Ho with a club.

Gun-Ho was hit and staggered.

"You, f*ckers! Who the hell are you?"

Jong-Suk stood up in front of Gun-Ho to prevent any further beating while yelling at them.

And then, he punched one of the gangsters, who was standing close to him, with his fist.

The man who was just hit by Jong-Suk on his face screamed in pain and collapsed on the ground. Another man attacked Jong-Suk, but Jong-Suk was faster than him. The second man got hit in his stomach and was knocked down.

"You, f*ckers! Are you still here? Are you waiting for another blow? I've been in this field before. F*ck away, you small fries!"

The group's leader took out a sashimi knife, and the others also took out their knives.

"He is wishing for his death! Kill him!"

Jong-Suk took out his screwdriver that he was always carrying around with him.

The gangsters attacked Jong-Suk and Gun-Ho with knives and clubs.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Four of them started fighting with Jong-Suk, and three of them attacked Gun-Ho with clubs and sashimi knives. Gun-Ho quickly blocked himself with a freestanding ashtray; it was more like a reflex which fortunately slowed down the attackers. The ashes from the ashtray scattered around, and the attackers couldn't open their eyes.

Gun-Ho could avoid the man with a knife, but he was hit in his head by a club. He was now bleeding from his head. Jong-Suk ran toward Gun-Ho and landed a blow on the attacker who just hit Gun-Ho with a club. The attacker's mouth became filled with his blood.

"Bro! Run! Go to a place where you see lots of people!"

Jong-Suk was fighting alone with four gangsters, but it was beyond his capacity. At that moment, one of the attackers successfully cut Jong-Suk's arm with a sashimi knife.

Jong-Suk and Gun-Ho started running toward the hotel.

"Don't let them slip out!"

When Gun-Ho arrived at the hotel lobby, he grabbed a plant that was placed inside the lobby and threw it toward the gangster group. It spattered soil in the air.

The customers inside the hotel lobby started screaming. The hotel staff ran toward Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was blocking one of the gangsters using a chair while bleeding from his head. Jong-Suk Park was actively fighting with several gangsters; he was agile and skillful. The hotel was in chaos.

The police arrived. Someone must have called 911.

Gun-Ho could hear a police car siren. When policemen in uniforms were pouring out from the car, the gangsters quickly left the scene. The police arrested one gangster who was hit in his stomach by Jong-Suk and who was lying down on the ground along with Jong-Suk Park and Gun-Ho.

"Show me your ID. Are you injured?"

The gangster acted as if he was in severe pain and said,

"I am the victim here."

"You, son of a bi*ch. He is not the victim."

Jong-Suk screamed.

"Be quiet. Give me your ID."

The policeman was trying to control the situation.

The police took the three men, who were involved in the fight and found at the scene, in the police vehicle and headed to a hospital. The gangster grabbed his stomach while he was in the process of seeing a doctor; he looked like in a lot of pain.

"Are you okay?"

The gangster didn't even respond to the policeman. In Jong-Suk's eyes, he was acting as if he was seriously injured. Jong-Suk quickly pressed the gangster's neck with his uninjured right hand and yelled at him,

"You, son of a bi*ch! Who sent you? Who is behind you?"

The policeman quickly separated Jong-Suk from the gangster and shouted at him,

"He seemed to be severely injured because you beat him up. And that was not enough for you? You are still trying to beat him more in the hospital? It seemed to be obvious that you are the assailant!"

"What are you talking about? They are the ones who attacked us first."

"We will see who is telling the truth. If you don't stay quiet, you will end up in jail soon!"

Gun-Ho talked Jong-Suk out of it,

"Just stay put, Jong-Suk. Let's get medical treatment first. Your left arm doesn't look good."

Fortunately, Gun-Ho was not seriously injured. His forehead needed some stitches; other than that, he was fine. Jong-Suk, on the other hand, was cut in his left forearm by one of the gangsters' sashimi knife. His cut required 16 stitches. The gangster made all the fuss about his pain and injury, but he was fine. After going through all sorts of medical examination including x-rays, the doctor concluded that he was totally fine except a small cut on his face which required 2 stitches. Jong-Suk kicked his face while fighting and that probably made that cut on his face.

Gun-Ho was lying down on the hospital bed while his forehead was being stitched. It was painful. While he received medical treatment, Gun-Ho thought.

'Who sent those gangsters to me? I didn't do anything that would incur someone's grudge against me. Maybe the workers who quit when we moved our factory's location? Nah. They are little people; they don't have that kind of money to buy those gangsters. What about... the BM Entertainment's manager who came to see me the other day? Well, he doesn't have enough motive to do this egregious act. He wouldn't get any benefit from this because it's not something I could make work. Then... who else? Oh, Egnopak? He is from a wealthy family and has enough money to do that. But he is an old man, and he should know better. Then who did this? I can't think of anyone who would do this to me.'

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk didn't have to stay in the hospital. They were immediately released from the hospital once they were treated. Before they could leave, the doctor told them,

"You should avoid any contact with water, and you should be careful when you wash your face. If you do that and take these pills as instructed, you should be fine. And don't forget to come to us every other day so we can check your wound and disinfect it until we could remove the stitches."

Gun-Ho was sitting on the hospital bed while getting an IV injection when the policeman entered the room with some paperwork.

"We need to talk with you about the fight you were involved earlier. Do you want to do it here or do you want to come to the police station with us?"

"I prefer to do it here."

Gun-Ho looked at the paper that the policeman took out. It was the statement of the gangster.

"We are the victims."

"He said that they were the victims."

"They attacked us with sashimi knives without any apparent reason."

"He told us a different story. He said, the Jong-Suk Park person attacked them with a screwdriver and threatened them that he would kill them. So one of his friends who was working in a restaurant brought a knife. Does it sound right?"

"No, not even close."

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo! You seem to be a gentleman. You must be honest with us."

"They attacked us as a group. And they were all prepared with a club and sashimi knives. It was a planned attack."

"According to the other party's statement, they didn't bring a knife at first. But as the fight became serious, one of his friends brought a knife from his workplace. And he picked up a club to protect himself. He said Jong-Suk Park attacked him first with a screwdriver. Does he carry his screwdriver all the time?"

"He is an engineer at a factory, so it's not strange at all to carry a screwdriver. It could be just a habit of his."

"So you are saying that he carries a screwdriver even if he was off duty. Well, let's move on."

The policeman seemed to think Gun-Ho's explanation about Jong-Suk's

screwdriver was ridiculous. Gun-Ho was baffled, but he couldn't think of any way to convince the policeman in the very situation.

"We will find out who is the victim or the attacker later. For now, I will just take your statement, your side of the story. Just tell me what happened in your own words."

255 Lynch 1 – PART 2

Once Gun-Ho was done giving his statement, the policeman asked him,

"Do you want to press charges against him?"

"I definitely do."

"The other party said he doesn't want to press charges. He doesn't seem to be a bad person. If you want to press charges, you should get your injury certificate issued by the hospital and file a complaint. The other party said, if you file a complaint against him, he would do the same thing."

Gun-Ho thought about it for a second. He had a lot of things going on in his life and business right now. He had to go to the U.S. in a few days to make an official contract for the joint venture. He didn't want to create any noise.

"Well, on second thought, I don't want to press charges. We were not severely injured. Their acts cannot be justified, but I won't press charges against them."

"Good decision, Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. The man said he didn't deserve to be beaten up like that, but since his injury was not that serious, he didn't want to press charges either. The fight seemed to be just accidental. I think this is good that both of you don't want to press charges against each other."

Jong-Suk entered the room where Gun-Ho was staying for now. He still seemed to be very upset about the whole thing.

"Bro, let's get to the bottom of this. We need to know who did this and punish him."

"That's enough. I have to prepare for my trip to the U.S. Let's just let it go this time."

"What? Are you serious? I will go crazy!"

Jong-Suk beat his own chest with his fist.

The policeman came back with an ink pad.

"Please sign with your thumbprint here."

Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk signed with their thumbprints with a stiff look on their faces.

The policeman took the paper back and put it in an envelope. Before he left the room, he said,

"Sometimes we just step on shit without a reason. It happens sometimes. I wish your quick recovery."

Egnopak's president—Seung-Gak Kim—was having liquor in a bar in Samsung Town, Gangnam with his son—Dong-Hwan Kim.

"Big brother, they did it. It was successful. Gun-Ho Goo's forehead was cut."

"I heard one of your people got caught by the police."

"He gave a statement to the police that he was attacked by Gun-Ho Goo's party. That guy is almost a genius actor. He can play the victim very well. He would be able to get some money from his victim after he beat him up."

"So everyone is released?"

"Yes. Gun-Ho Goo gave up on pressing charges."

"A cut on his forehead is probably not enough. We should have broken his leg or something."

"I am thinking of attacking him one more time."

"What's your plan?"

"We can hit his head from behind in a dark alley or in an underground parking lot."

"There should be CCTV."

"We can find some spots without CCTV. If you make your order, I am on it. And

we would appreciate it if you could give us some small bonus."

Gun-Ho went to work with a bandage on his forehead. The directors asked him,

"What happened, sir?"

"Oh, this? It's nothing. I just tripped and fell."

"You must have drunk too much, sir."

"Hahaha. No, I didn't drink. I was just being preoccupied and tripped."

Jong-Suk had a bigger cut, but since the cut was on his forearm, no one recognized it because he was wearing long sleeves. He just felt pain whenever he had to use his left arm while working.

Gun-Ho asked for the sales director.

"Do you know what the former vice president of S Group is doing now?"

"Well, as far as I know, he is staying home. I remember how passionate he was in developing a new product."

"He couldn't stay with S Group because his friend who is a lot younger than him joined the company as his boss."

"He actually has 2 to 3 more years left before he retires, but he decided to quit the job earlier. I think he doesn't have enough base or personal connections in Korea since he worked abroad most of the time. And the new president has been in Korea in his entire career."

"What do you mean?"

"S Group has several branches and subsidiaries overseas, and he worked in those locations during his time with S Group. So he didn't have a chance to establish connections here in Korea. That's why he wasn't promoted to the president position, but his friend who is younger and less experienced got the position."

"Some politics are going on there, huh?"

"I guess every single organization has at least a little bit of politics within it,

whether it is a big or small organization."

"Why don't you go see him in the near future? He will be happy to see you when you go see him while he is staying at home."

"Right. I was actually thinking of it too. I just couldn't find the right time yet. I talked with him on the phone once though. At that time, he was planning a trip to Europe with his wife. Since he has spare time now, he is using it to spend more time with his wife and traveling."

It was almost the contract day with Lymondell Dyeon.

Gun-Ho headed to the Incheon International Airport and met with Attorney Young-Jin Kim to go on a trip to Seattle in the U.S.

"Hey, you are wearing jeans. You look so young in it. I would believe it if you said you are a graduate schoolboy."

"I have my business suit in my luggage. Hey, what's up with your forehead? What happened?"

"I got beat up."

"What? By whom?"

"I will tell you the story once we arrive in Seattle. Let's have some beer or something. I need to tell you how I got beat up on the street."

"Well, if you got beat up by a girl, that's a badge of honor, right?"

"I would be happy if that's what it is. I got beat up by a bunch of gangsters."

"Gangsters?"

Once they arrived in Seattle, they took a subway from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport to downtown. Gun-Ho was dozing off in the subway. He felt exhausted after the long flight.

Even after he arrived at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown, he still felt so sleepy. He had a fever and a headache.

"Attorney Kim! I think you should have dinner by yourself. I am not feeling well, and I think I'd better take some rest in my hotel room."

"Okay, no problem. You don't look so good. I will hear your beating-up story next time."

Gun-Ho laid down on the bed in his hotel room and covered himself with two layers of blankets. He still felt cold. Attorney Young-Jin Kim brought some medicine to Gun-Ho's room. The worry could obviously be seen on his face.

"I brought you a cold medicine. I will place it on the table. Take it later when you can get up. You are probably exhausted because of the long-hour flight and the time difference."

"Okay. Thank you."

Gun-Ho took the cold medicine that Attorney Kim dropped off and fell asleep.

The next morning, Gun-Ho felt better after taking a shower. The phone in the room started ringing. It was Attorney Kim.

"How are you feeling?"

"I feel much better now. I think the medicine you gave me worked."

"That's good. Can you come down to have breakfast?"

"Yes. I will be there soon."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho had porridge at the restaurant in the hotel. Attorney Kim looked relieved and said,

"I was worried about you. I thought you might not be able to attend the meeting to sign the contract."

"Even if I am sick, I will sign the contract before going back to Korea."

"You and I... we can't be sick even though we are sick, and we can't die even

though we want to die."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim went to Lymondell Dyeon. Angelina Rein and the vice president—Mr. Brandon Burke—greeted them with pleasure.

256 Lynch 2 – PART 1

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim followed Ms. Angelina Rein to a small meeting room. Gun-Ho sat at the table facing the vice president—Mr. Brandon Burke while Attorney Kim was sitting at the opposite side of Ms. Angelina Rein facing her.

Mr. Brandon Burke talked first while looking at Gun-Ho.

"We came this far Mr. Gun-Ho Goo. We are so pleased to have a good business partner."

"I am very delighted as well to have a chance to work with a global company like Lymondell Dyeon."

"We have constantly talked about the terms of the joint venture, so I guess we have only a few things left to discuss. We already prepared the necessary paperwork here. Here is the gist of its content for you to read."

The vice president— Mr. Brandon Burke showed the contract along with a summary of the contract content to Gun-Ho.

1. The joint venture's authorized capital will be 20 million dollars and the paid-in capital will be 10 million dollars. Investment in kind is allowed.
2. The initial investment fund is 1 million dollars. Once the contract is signed by both parties, each party will contribute 50,000 dollars in cash within a week from the date of the contract.
3. The duration of the joint venture is 20 years. If both parties agree, a patent license agreement can be made after the duration of the joint venture expires, by a written agreement.
4. A director's term is 2 years. The president of the joint venture can be appointed by either party.
5. Material matters must be determined by the board of directors.

Gun-Ho requested to name the joint venture as GH Chemical so they could effectively appeal to the Asia markets such as China and Southeast Asia, but, Lymondell Dyeon didn't accept it. They were adamant about naming the joint venture differently. Accordingly, they wanted to make an addendum to the contract stating that the joint venture's name would be Dyeon Korea. It would also state that they could change the name of the company when they would make a patent license agreement.

Gun-Ho was also having second thoughts about the name of the joint venture.

'Dyeon Korea is okay. Maybe it is better that way. Dyeon is a highly known name in the world, so maybe that would help our sales. Okay, Dyeon Korea, as it is.'

"So, do you agree to name the joint venture as Dyeon Korea?"

"I agree. However, I want to add a statement saying that during the joint venture period, Dyeon will not make another joint venture in the East Asia area."

"What about this? We say, there will not be another joint venture in the East Asia area unless two parties agree to it, rather than saying it is impossible at all."

Gun-Ho smiled and said,

"Sounds good."

At that very moment, Attorney Young-Jin Kim who was sitting next to Gun-Ho kicked Gun-Ho's shin under the table and said in Korean,

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo. Are you sure is it what we want?"

"Don't worry about it. If we determine later that an additional joint venture is necessary, Dyeon and GH Mobile can do it together."

"Oh, I see... Well, you are indeed a businessman. A businessman has indeed had a different mindset from people like me. You are unbelievable."

Gun-Ho continued to read the addendum, and then he said,

"According to the addendum, GH Mobile needs to select three workers and send

them for one-month training within 10 days from the date of the contract."

"Right. It is impossible for a worker to learn the know-how of our chemical compounds within a month. Therefore, after one month of training, Dyeon will send our engineers to the joint venture for a three-month period."

"Okay."

Mr. Brandon Burke nominated Ms. Angelina Rein and himself as the directors of the joint venture for the Dyeon side. Gun-Ho gave his name and GH Mobile's sales director's name as the directors representing the GH Mobile side. He hadn't talked about this to the sales director though.

'The joint venture is a start-up company. The technology and know-how about products are important; however, sales are very important as well. So, I think I'd better place our sales director in the joint venture.'

The signing ceremony was held while Dyeon's foreign investment committee and other directors attended. Gun-Ho and Mr. Brandon Burke sat at a table where the national flag of South Korea and the star-spangled banner were placed on, and they signed on the contract. Attorney Young-Jin Kim was standing behind Gun-Ho and Mr. Brandon Burke, along with Ms. Angelina Rein and three directors from the factory. Attorney Young-Jin Kim asked the photographer to transfer the pictures that he just took of the signing ceremony to him. Attorney Kim then sent those pictures to his Kim & Jeong Law Firm before calling them.

"This is Attorney Young-Jin Kim from the U.S. Our client, GH Mobile just signed the contract with Lymondell Dyeon in Seattle for the joint venture. I just sent the pictures to the office. Please send them out to the press."

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim attended a dinner party that was hosted by Mr. Brandon Burke in that evening. Mr. Brandon Burke introduced a man to Gun-Ho; the man looked like he was in his late 30s and he had thick eyebrows.

"This is Adam Castler. He is the vice president of Dyeon's joint venture in Mexico. Once Dyeon Korea is established, he will work there as the vice president."

"Oh, really? Nice to meet you."

Gun-Ho offered his hand to this Adam Castler person for a handshake. Attorney Young-Jin Kim also had a handshake with him. Gun-Ho now could speak English well for a simple conversation or greeting. He had been learning English from the morning English class in GH Mobile by the instructor who was also teaching at Hoseo University. Gun-Ho's English was improving as time went on.

Gun-Ho and Mr. Castler exchanged their business cards.

After the big event of the signing ceremony, people from Dyeon and Gun-Ho's party celebrated it at the dinner party, and everyone drank a lot that evening. Ms. Angelina Rein even sang a song after a few glasses of liquor. She had a beautiful soprano voice.

Gun-Ho and Attorney Young-Jin Kim came back to the hotel on foot. The place where a dinner party was held was not far from their hotel, so they decided to walk, so they could get some fresh air on the way. They thought walking to the hotel would sober them up as well.

"How are you doing? Are you feeling better?"

"Yeah. It is nice walking in the evening."

"Would you like to have a cup of tea before we go up to our rooms?"

"Sure. I want to hear your getting-beat-up story."

Gun-Ho and Young-Jin went to a café inside the hotel and ordered a black tea.

After Gun-Ho told the entire story about him being beaten up by a gangster, Young-Jin nodded his head and said,

"Yeah. It seems like there has to be someone behind it. If we don't find out who sent those people to you, another attack could ensue."

"I agree with you. I told the police that I don't want to press charges because I had other urgent things I had to take care of. But, once I go back to Korea, I want to request a reinvestigation."

"Hmm."

"I didn't want to press charges at that time because I had to come to Seattle for the contract signing. I didn't want to make unnecessary noises by filing a complaint, and also by being sued by those people. The police would have asked me to come to the police station all the time for their investigation. Moreover, the guy who got beat up by Manager Jong-Suk Park was injured more than me or Jong-Suk. Once we make it a big deal, it would have become more troublesome to us. Of course, we would be able to prove that they were the ones who attacked us first since there is CCTV in the hotel."

"It's surprising."

"What is?"

"You. You are so calm and patient even in this situation."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Don't be silly!"

"No, I'm serious. There are several clients in our law firm, who are really rich. Do you know what they have in common? It's self-control just like you do. They don't burst with anger. They even talk slowly."

"Cut it out, man. Just focus on the incident that I just told you."

"You don't even need an attorney for this case. An attorney is required when there is a dispute, but in your case, there is nothing to dispute. It is an obvious criminal case. Congratulations. You will make a lot of money in exchange for a few stitches on your forehead. Well, you do have special luck in your life to make money."

"I don't care about being beaten up by small fish. I want to know who sent them to me."

"So, you want to let them lower their guard thinking that it was a successful attack without being accused, and then you want to surprise them by attacking."

257 Lynch 2 – PART 2

"I have a favor to ask you, Attorney Kim."

"What is it?"

"I'm going to make a request to Asan Police to reinvestigate my case. I will then give you a call."

"They will find out what really happened if they reinvestigate. What do you need me for?"

"You don't know how things work in the police system. I don't want to prolong the reinvestigation process. The police are not loyal to the citizens, but they are loyal to their boss."

"Wow. You are incredible. I thought you accumulated your wealth by sheer luck, but I guess I was wrong. So, you are asking me if I know any high ranked officer in the police, am I right?"

"If the wirepuller has enough power and right connections, he could have some controls within the police as well. So, I want to give him Omni-directional pressure."

"How are you are going to do that?"

"I won't give him enough time to defend himself. I will make him kneel down on the ground in front of me."

"Hmm."

"I don't intend to put a few gangsters behind bars. I want some gains in my business."

"You are suspecting Egnopak."

Gun-Ho didn't say anything but he smiled in response to Attorney Kim's speculation.

"A businessman usually wants practical benefits rather than justification, I can see that."

Gun-Ho said while wiping his mouth with a paper napkin after having a sip of his black tea.

"There should be someone in Kim & Jeong Law Firm, who used to work as a policeman, isn't there?"

"Of course, there is. One of the advisors used to work as a police commissioner."

"Once I file my request to reinvestigate my case with the Asan police station, will you ask him to give a call to their chief police officer at the Asan police station?"

"What do you want him to say to them?"

"He can just tell them to reinvestigate it thoroughly and find out what really happened. He doesn't have to ask them to work in favor of a victim or an attacker."

"That's it?"

"I will take care of the press afterward."

Gun-Ho came back to Korea. Once he returned to his office, he showed the contract with Lymondell Dyeon to the GH Mobile's directors and managers. He also sent the contract to GH Development's office in GH Building in Sinsa Town, Seoul, and asked the new secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh to translate it into the Korean language.

The secretary from GH Development asked Gun-Ho over the phone with a sweet voice,

"Is that okay for me to send you the translated contract via email, sir?"

"No, please make five copies of it and mail them to me to my office in Jiksan Town by express mail."

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

Gun-Ho then asked for Director Yoon who was in charge of construction.

"Director Yoon, we finally have the contract signed. Prepare to start the infrastructure construction work."

"Yes, sir. I've already selected a construction company. We can get it started right away."

"Just get ready to start it for now. I will have to let you know the right time to start it."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Just be prepared until you hear further notice from me."

Gun-Ho went to the police station in Asan City and made a formal request to re-investigate his case. He attached to his request, the injury certificates of himself and Jong-Suk, which were issued by the hospital. The injury certificates stated that both Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk required 2 weeks to fully recover from the injuries, even though Gun-Ho had 4 stitches and Jong-Suk had 16 stitches. This was because healing would take about the same time once the stitches were done. Gun-Ho, therefore, added Jong-Suk's additional injury in other body parts to the certificate so he could get 3 weeks' recovery time indicated on his injury certificate.

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Attorney Young-Jin Kim.

"I just submitted my request for re-investigation."

"Okay. I will ask our advising attorney to call them right away."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Thank you."

"Did they already start their investigation per your request?"

"I'm not sure. I just received one phone call from a policeman for it. He just wanted to verify if I requested the re-investigation."

"Haha. Okay. I guess we will have to make them expedite your case."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs manager.

"We have a few journalists attended at our building dedication ceremony last time, right?"

"Yes."

"Can you contact them and thank them for coming to our earlier building dedication ceremony, and also tell them that we want to invite them for dinner. And ask them to bring more journalists who couldn't attend our ceremony last time."

Four journalists came to GH Mobile. Journalists usually came to meet business owners gladly when their presence was requested. One of the journalists talked to Gun-Ho. He attended GH Mobile's building dedication ceremony before.

"Our newspaper covered your joint venture contract with a big American company."

This journalist worked for an economic newspaper, and it was sometimes fed by Kim & Jeong Law Firm as their source.

Another journalist chipped in.

"I read that news. Our community is so proud of GH Mobile."

Gun-Ho responded with a worried look on his face,

"I initially planned to build a factory for our new joint venture business in the Northern area of Chungnam province, but, I think I have to move it to another area."

"Why? Is there any reason for the change in your plan?"

"Security. The area is not safe. I was once beaten up on the street near a hotel without any reason. Lymondell Dyeon wouldn't want to invest in a provincial area where the safety issue is apparent. So I am seriously considering moving our factory to Gyeonggi Province."

"What the hell the local police are doing?"

The journalists started raising their voices.

"I think we can talk about the incident on the newspapers, so the local community becomes aware of the safety issue and the police would improve the security in the area."

"You are absolutely right. If that's what happened, it is a big problem."

"Hey, Mr. Park, why don't you cover the story? I will send it to my head office too."

The chief police officer in Asan City received a phone call from the former commissioner police. Once he got off the phone, he called for the police officer who was in charge of Gun-Ho's case.

"Detective Kim. The assault case you are working on to reinvestigate. The one that occurred near the Onyang Hot Spring Hotel."

"What about it, sir?"

"How is the re-investigation going?"

"I am working on it, sir."

"Make it quick. An important person is paying attention to that case."

"Yes, sir. I am analyzing the CCTV records right now."

Newspapers covered public safety issues in Asan City. The news articles stated that the safety issue was hindering foreign investment to the area. The government officials in Asan City started raising their voices on the issue.

"It is already hard to attract foreign investment to our community, but the ones that were planned to be established in our area will be taken away because of our community's security issue? What the hell the police is doing?!"

Asan City's police station started getting calls.

"I am the president of the Chamber of Commerce. Did you read the newspaper?"

We are actively promoting the business in our area. But you are killing it because you don't do your work right."

"I've read the newspaper. We are reinvestigating the incident."

"Are you the chief police officer? I am the president of the Small and Mid-size Business Committee. Did you read the newspaper today?"

"Yes, I have. I am so sorry. We will arrest those people who were involved in the assault."

The chief police officer was vastly upset.

"Have the chief criminal investigator, the head of the police investigator, and the detective in charge of this case come to my office right now!"

258 Lynch 3 – PART 1

Detectives in the criminal investigation department at the police station in Asan City were summoned to the chief police officer's office. The chief police officer was vastly upset and said,

"What's going on with the assault case that occurred near Onyang Hot Spring Hotel? The entire city is paying attention to it. You all read the newspaper, right? I can't do my work because of this. Calls kept coming into my office regarding that case!"

"We are done with analyzing, sir, and we are in the process of arresting the guys who were involved in it."

"I saw the CCTV record. They are obviously gangsters! Arrest them all. Oh, and check if there is a wirepuller and arrest him too!"

"Yes, sir."

"Detective Kim! Do you remember the three things that would show what really happened? I told you about it before. Tell me those three things!"

"They are CCTV analysis, phone logs, and bank statements, sir."

"Did you look at all three of them or not? Did you send a letter to KT (Korea Telecom) asking for their cooperation? Did you?"

"Umm, yes, sir. We did."

"Expedite the investigation and give me a report quickly. I will need the report by the day after tomorrow. I will be questioned about the case during the meeting for local government officials. Don't make me feel embarrassed in that meeting, okay?"

"Yes, sir."

"Detective Kim, go and see the victim and apologize to him. And tell him we will do everything we could in order to arrest the attackers. I think we are

dealing with a powerful person here. Do you have any idea who the victim is? He is the one who acquired RiverStar building in Gangnam, Seoul!"

The detective knew intuitively,

'This is not a simple assault. I smell something fishy about this case.'

Once they walked out of the chief officer's office, the lead detective called for the lead investigator and the detective in charge of the case, and told them,

"The assault was committed to a businessman. This case must be handled with care. We might be audited for it as well. Moreover, it's already in our local newspapers, and it could appear soon in other national newspapers. For the moment, you two go meet the victim and apologize to him. After you meet with the victim, arrest all of those attackers."

The lead investigator and Detective Kim arrived at Gun-Ho's GH Mobile factory. The detective was surprised after learning that the victim was the owner of the factory.

"I thought the victim was just working for this company like a manager or something because he is so young. I didn't expect to find out he was the owner of this company."

"The victim is in his mid-30s, right? Yeah... he must have a rich daddy, that's how he can run a big company like this. The small people like us, we have to work our asses off and go around catching gangsters without getting enough sleep at night."

The lead police investigator and the detective headed to the general affairs department.

"Excuse me. We are from the criminal investigation department at the police station in Asan City. We'd like to talk with President Gun-Ho Goo."

A staff at the general affairs department showed them to Gun-Ho's office.

Gun-Ho was reading a newspaper when they entered the office. Gun-Ho lifted his head to look at those two sturdy men whom a staff of the general affairs department brought to his office.

"Are you President Gun-Ho Goo? I am the lead investigator at the Asan City's police station."

"Oh, I see. Please have a seat."

A female staff from the general affairs department brought green tea to them.

"We are so sorry that you have been attacked within our precinct."

"Oh, okay."

"We have the list of the assailants who attacked you, sir. There are eight. Four of them are the gangsters from the Cheonan City area, and four of them are from Seoul. We will arrest all of them within the next two days."

"I am more interested in the person behind this incident, who hired those gangsters to attack me."

"Once we arrest and started interrogating them, we will find out the wirepuller soon. Usually, their bank statements and the call logs will tell who paid them to do this."

"Hmm."

"Our chief police officer is paying close attention to this case. You don't have to worry about it. We apologize to you again, sir, for this unfortunate incident that happened in our precinct."

Once the detective and the lead investigator left Gun-Ho's office, the lady staff from the general affairs department brought a mail to Gun-Ho. It was from the U.S.

"Oh, it's from Lymondell Dyeon. We are sending the power of attorney along with the resolution of the Board of Directors, so please register for foreign investment. Well, they know what has to be done next. They do have a lot of experience with foreign investment."

Gun-Ho called for the same lady staff of the general affairs department.

"Can you scan these documents and send them to Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh at GH

Development? And ask her to translate it into Korean and send it back to me."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then made a phone call to the general affairs manager.

"Mr. General Affairs Manager? Is the assistant manager available? I have something that I want him to work on. Please send him to my office."

"Yes, sir."

After a moment, the good-looking assistant manager of the general affairs department entered Gun-Ho's office. He was of the same age as Gun-Ho and he was from Cheonan City.

Gun-Ho said with a smile,

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Please have a seat."

"Yes, sir."

The assistant manager carefully sat at the table. The assistant manager felt difficult around Gun-Ho even though Gun-Ho was of the same age as him because Gun-Ho was the company owner president and he also owns several other companies.

"How's your work? Do you like what you do here?"

"Yes, sir."

"I've heard a lot about you from Manager Jong-Suk Park from the production team. He said that you are a hard worker."

"Oh, ummm. Thank you, sir."

"You have heard that we will soon start a joint venture, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir. I am well aware of it. We are building a new factory for the joint

venture with Lymondell Dyeon on the land where we used to have an old factory in Asan City."

"We need someone who takes charge of the registration work for that joint venture. We will need to register the foreign investment. Will you undertake the work?"

"Oh, the registration work? I haven't done it before though..."

"No one has experience with the foreign investment registration in our company. You graduated from a college in this area with high grades, and I highly evaluate your work here as well. I believe you can do this."

"But..."

"We all have the first time for everything, and we learn as we do. And we become experienced like that. Here are the documents from Lymondell Dyeon. They are all written in English. They are the power of attorney and the resolution of their board of directors, and they are all notarized. GH Development in Seoul is working on the translation of these documents into Korean. Once we receive the translated version, make a report for the foreign investment first."

"Where do I make a report to?"

"You can do it to Korea Exchange Bank. I believe most banks such as Kukmin Bank, Shinhan Bank, and Woori Bank will handle it these days. They all handle foreign exchange work with their international business networks."

"Okay, sir. I will do it."

The assistant manager from the general affairs department took the documents that Gun-Ho handed to him and walked out of Gun-Ho's office.

259 Lynch 3 – PART 2

Gun-Ho opened the website of Financial Supervisory Service—DART (Data Analysis, Retrieval, and Transfer System).

"Egnopak is a KOSDAQ registered company, so I will be able to retrieve the name list of their executives here."

Gun-Ho took a look at Egnopak's audit report and business report.

"They have 2,900 employees and the average salary of a worker there is 72 million won... Well, they pay their employees good money. I'll give you that."

Gun-Ho then checked their status of shares and the list of the executives of that company.

"The president is Seung-Gak Kim, 64 years old... the managing director is Dong-Hwan Kim, 33 years old... This guy is probably his son. Maybe this guy paid the gangsters to attack me..."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho looked at Dong-Hwan Kim's work experience and the status of his employment with Egnopak.

[Dong-Hwan Kim / Registered director / Part-time / USC bachelor's degree | USC master's degree in business / Managing director of Egnopak in LA.]

"He has a typical profile as a person who was born into a wealthy family."

Gun-Ho then searched Dong-Hwan Kim on the Internet. He had a three-years-old criminal record. He assaulted a worker in a bar and he subsequently was arrested.

"He seems to be a compulsive guy. He is just garbage that I don't have to worry about."

Gun-Ho smiled while closing the DART.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from the detective who came to see Gun-Ho earlier.

"Hi. This is Detective Kim from Asan Police. We have arrested six of eight assailants and we are currently interrogating them."

"Oh, really? Thank you for your good work."

"They all initially denied the fact that they attacked you, but, once we showed them the CCTV records, they confessed what they did. We are still trying to find the remaining two attackers."

"I am so proud of our country's police officers, not to mention their great ability and superior skills in investigating."

"We will soon arrest the other two attackers."

"Do we know who paid them to do that?"

"We do have an idea who would that be, but they are refusing to say anything about it."

"Who are you suspecting?"

"We are still investigating, sir. We can't tell you that before we are sure of it."

Gun-Ho was so curious about the wirepuller, and he bluntly said,

"Did any of the attackers mention the name—Dong-Hwan Kim? The son of Egnopak's president?"

"That... As a matter of fact, yes, the name came out during the interrogation, but he said he just borrowed 3 million won from him. He said he borrowed the money at Queen Bar in Samsung Town, Seoul for his OneRoomTel's security deposit."

"Okay. Well, thank you for letting me know."

Once he got off the phone with the detective, Gun-Ho wrote down the name of

the bar on a piece of paper, which was located in Samsung Town.

"What am I going to do with them?"

Gun-Ho was thinking of the gangsters who attacked him, and that reminded him of the bouncers at the secret bar in Hannam Town.

"The leader of the bouncers gave me his business card..."

Gun-Ho looked for the business card.

"Security Instructor, Tae-Young Im. This is it."

Gun-Ho dialed the numbers shown on the business card. After the phone rang twice, someone picked up the phone.

"Oh, big brother. It's me."

It seemed that Tae-Young Im stored Gun-Ho's number on his cell phone, so he could recognize Gun-Ho's number right away. He called Gun-Ho 'big brother.'

"How have you been?"

"Brother, you can talk to me in a more informal way."

"What are you doing these days?"

"Nothing much actually. The bar in Hannam Town is re-doing their interior right now, so I am off these days."

"If I remember correctly, you said you went to school in Gangnam, right? Do you happen to know a bar with a name, 'Queen?'"

"Queen? The one that is located behind the Hyundai Department Store?"

"I am not sure about its location. So, there is a bar called Queen, huh?"

"Yes. That bar is not bad. Pretty people and rich people often go there. The rich kids who used to study abroad gather there frequently. Are you interested in visiting the bar?"

"Someone recommended me to that bar."

"I know people there. I have some friends who are junior to me there."

"That's good. Can you then ask them if they know the Egnopak president's son? His name is Dong-Hwan Kim. Ask them if they see him often at the bar. He went to college overseas, so maybe he goes there often too."

"Sure. Will do."

"Well, please do so quietly. I don't want a rumor going around that I am looking for him or anything like that."

"Don't worry about it."

After a while, Gun-Ho received a call from Tae-Young Im.

"Brother, I talked to my friends at Queen. The police are looking for him, so it wasn't easy to get in touch with him. He said, that the Dong-Hwan Kim person likes one of the girls who are working there, so he often comes to the bar. He comes pretty much once every three days. Since he didn't come for the last two days, he will probably come to the bar tomorrow."

"Really? Thank you."

"Is that it? Is there anything else you want to ask me?"

"Do you want to have some drinks with me?"

"Oh, that sounds really great. I was so thirsty for liquor."

"Okay. Then come to Queen tomorrow at 8 pm."

"Can I bring some of my friends too?"

"Of course. You can bring all of the bouncers who are working for the bar in Hannam Town."

"Will do, brother! Thank you."

The next day, Gun-Ho asked for Manager Jong-Suk Park.

"Hey, why don't you go to Seoul with me tonight?"

"Seoul? What for?"

"I want to show you something interesting."

"Interesting thing? Like what?"

"You will see once you get there."

"Tell me, bro. I am busy."

"We will see the person who paid the gangsters who cut your forearm."

"Did you find him?"

"Finish your work by 5 pm, and come to my office."

Gun-Ho drove to Samsung Town in Gangnam, Seoul with Jong-Suk. There was heavy traffic in Yangjae Town, so they arrived at the bar a little after 8 pm.

The Queen Bar was located in the basement, maybe because it would make a lot of noise given their nature of the business. When Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk arrived at the bar, good-looking young men came out to greet them. A lady clerk at the front desk asked them,

"Did you make a reservation with us, sir?"

"Well, I am not so sure about it. Can you check if you have a reservation under the name, 'GH?'"

"Did you say GH, sir? People are waiting for you, sir."

A young man in a black suit showed Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk to a room. The bar's interior was luxurious with synthetic marbles. Gun-Ho felt like he was in the Sheraton Hotel in Seattle.

In the room where Gun-Ho was led to, seven bouncers were having a beer. They quickly stood up when they saw Gun-Ho coming into the room.

"Brother!"

The bouncers gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk.

"Hi, how have you all been doing?"

Gun-Ho had a handshake with each bouncer in the room.

"I hope you don't mind us starting drinking earlier. We were thirsty, brother."

"That's good. Let's have a seat."

Tae-Young Im quickly filled two glasses with beer and gave to Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk.

"Team Leader Im! Can you check if the Egnopak's Dong-Hwan Kim is here today?"

"Yes, brother."

Tae-Young Im pressed a button on the table, and a young staff came to the room fast.

"Hey, the man I told you about earlier. Is he here now?"

"Yes, brother. He is here. He is in another room across the hall."

"Whom is he with?"

"There are three men and three women in that room. The girls are our girls."

"Who are those two men?"

"We don't know them. I guess they are his friends."

"Are they in the same field as us?"

"It doesn't seem that way."

"Okay. That will be all."

"Okay, brother."

The young man gave a bow to Tae-Young Im before walking out of the room.

Everyone looked at Gun-Ho's face. They seemed to be asking him 'what do you want us to do next?' Gun-Ho said slowly,

"We will teach the guy a lesson today. The one, Dong-Hwan Kim who is sitting in the other room."

260 Lynch 4 – PART 1

When Gun-Ho announced that he wanted to teach the guy a lesson, Tae-Young Im quickly came forward.

"Big brother. We will be on it. We need some exercise anyway."

"I don't want to give him a lesson in a physical way. But I want to educate him with words."

When Jong-Suk realized that Gun-Ho didn't intend to beat that guy up, he burst with anger.

"They attacked us physically. If you don't want to beat them up, I will do it. You just watch me do it, bro."

Gun-Ho shook his head slowly.

"We are mature people. We don't do that. We are not gangsters like them."

"Bro, you are too nice, you shouldn't be especially to them."

"Well, just leave it to me for now. Dong-Hwan Kim is not my target. I want his father—Seung-Gak Kim—to submit himself to me. The reason I want you all to be here today is that I want to show you how Dong-Hwan Kim would surrender to me. I want you to witness it. Just stay next to me and watch it."

Gun-Ho headed to the room, where Dong-Hwan Kim was enjoying his time with his friends, accompanied by Jong-Suk, Tae-Young Im, and other bouncers.

Dong-Hwan Kim was having his liquor while hugging a girl who was half-naked. When he saw the group of nine sturdy men entering the room, he seemed to be frightened.

"Who are you? This is my room!"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho said slowly, "Are you Dong-Hwan Kim?"

"Who are you?!"

Dong-Hwan Kim hadn't seen Gun-Ho before. He asked someone to take a picture of Gun-Ho in order to show the gangster who they should attack, but he hadn't actually seen him in person.

"Me, I am Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Gun... Ho Goo?!"

Gun-Ho looked at the girls in the room.

"Why don't you give us some privacy here?"

The female workers grabbed their clothes and purses and left the room hastily.

Gun-Ho then talked to the other two men in the room, who was drinking with Dong-Hwan Kim.

"We have some business to take care of with Mr. Dong-Hwan Kim. Why don't you give us a moment and continue having fun in the next room? Tae-Young Im! Show these two gentlemen to the room next door!"

"Yes, brother!"

The two men, who were having a drink with Dong-Hwan Kim, picked up their jackets and followed Tae-Young to the room next door. They seemed to be scared.

Once Dong-Hwan's friends left the room, Gun-Ho came forward to the table where Dong-Hwan was sitting at. Gun-Ho then put his right foot on the table and grabbed Dong-Hwan by his hair. Dong-Hwan was frightened. Gun-Ho asked,

"Why did you do that?"

"What are you talking about? Let go of my hair and let's talk."

"The gangsters, who were arrested, confessed everything at the Asan police station. The police already verified the payment of 3 million won you sent to

those gangsters."

Gun-Ho shook Dong-Hwan's hair twice and Dong-Hwan screamed in pain and also in fear.

"Please let go of my hair. Let's talk face-to-face."

At that moment, Jong-Suk suddenly took out a sashimi knife. Jong-Suk didn't tell Gun-Ho that he would bring a knife, but he carried it with him.

"Do you recognize this knife?"

Jong-Suk held the knife close to Dong-Hwan's eyes.

"The men you sent to us cut my forearm with this knife."

Jong-Suk rolled up his sleeve and showed Dong-Hwan his wound. There was an ugly scar on his forearm, which looked like a centipede.

"I'm going to give you exactly the same scar."

Jong-Suk then held his knife to Dong-Hwan's neck.

"Pl... please don't kill me."

Dong-Hwan was terrified in extreme fear, and he even peed his pants. He was shaking. Dong-Hwan had beaten up a lot of people so far, but he had probably never experienced the fear of being beaten up or killed by others. That was the life he had until now as a man who was born into a wealthy family.

"Stop it."

Jong-Suk retrieved his knife as Gun-Ho asked him to, but he kicked Dong-Hwan's shin before he retreated.

Dong-Hwan screamed. He grabbed his shin while frowning in pain.

"Kneel! You son of a bi*ch!"

Dong-Hwan was rubbing his shin pretending he didn't hear that Jong-Suk asked him to kneel.

"I said kneel! I guess you need something else other than my words to hear what I say."

Jong-Suk pulled out his sashimi knife again.

"You son of a bi*ch, I will give you a mark on your face!"

Jong-Suk gestured as if he would really cut Dong-Hwan's face. Dong-Hwan was terrified.

"I... I will do it."

Dong-Hwan finally kneeled, and he was shaking in fear.

Gun-Ho pinched Dong-Hwan's cheek with his thumb and finger; he then shook it. Dong-Hwan screamed in pain.

Gun-Ho kept pinching and shaking Dong-Hwan's cheek despite his scream. Gun-Ho then said,

"You jerk. You have a pretty face, but what you did to us was not pretty at all."

Gun-Ho then pulled out a piece of blank paper from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"Write down that you paid the gangsters 3 million won and asked them to assault Gun-Ho Goo, and as a result, they attacked Gun-Ho Goo near the Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. And also, write down that you are the wire puller of the Onyang Hot Spring Hotel assault case."

Dong-Hwan wrote a confession statement as instructed by Gun-Ho. His hand was shaking while writing the statement. The statement was then signed by himself with his thumbprint.

"If you are arrested by the police, it will work unfavorably to your case. If you want to have less time in prison, go to Asan City tomorrow and turn yourself in."

Dong-Hwan started shedding tears.

"Okay. I will do that."

Gun-Ho then turned around and said to Jong-Suk Park and Tae-Young's party,

"Thank you for coming today. Let's go. I guess we are done here."

Jong-Suk protested,

"Bro? Are we done? Are we just going to leave that son of bi*ch like that? No, bro. I need to beat him up today."

"That's enough!"

Jong-Suk Park had the last words for Dong-Hwan before he left the room. He pulled out the sashimi knife again and walked toward Dong-Hwan, and said,

"You, if you try anything stupid again, I will poke your belly with this knife."

While saying that, Jong-Suk simulated poking Dong-Hwan's belly with his knife. Dong-Hwan was surprised, and he covered his belly with his hand. Jong-Suk then grabbed Dong-Hwan's hair and shook it. A few strands of Dong-Hwan's hair fell to the ground.

"You, as*hole, I was a member of the gangster in Incheon City. It's a piece of cake to make a jerk like you disappear! Just know how lucky you are. If Gun-Ho brother was not here today, you would have been dead already! You got that?"

Tae-Young Im, who was in a black suit, came forward and talked to Dong-Hwan,

"If I see you around our big brother again, I will bury you alive. Be very careful about walking on the street."

Dong-Hwan was just kneeling on the ground while his body shook because of fear. He had probably never been treated like this by others in his entire life. He was born rich and raised in the same environment, and he had acted as if he was above all others.

The following day, Dong-Hwan went to Asan City and turned himself in.

Gun-Ho was having a cup of coffee in his office when he received a call from the detective who was in charge of Gun-Ho's case.

"The wire puller turned himself in. We also arrested the other two attackers, and they are on their way to our police station now. Once the investigation is completed, we will send them to a prosecutor's office."

"Thank you for your hard work, detective."

261 Lynch 4 – PART 2

Gun-Ho then asked for Director Yoon.

"Let's get the infrastructure construction work started."

"Yes, sir. We will build a splendid factory, and you will be pleased, sir."

While Gun-Ho was talking with Director Yoon, the accounting manager entered the office.

"Sir, we have just received the initial operating fund of 50,000 dollars from Lymondell Dyeon."

"Really? The assistant manager of the general affairs department is currently working on the registration of the joint venture so give him the receipt slip of that fund."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then called for the general affairs assistant manager.

"Did you bring the form to report the foreign investment from a bank?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you receive the translated version of the Lymondell Dyeon's power of attorney and board of director's resolution from GH Development's secretary?"

"Yes, sir. I just received them."

"Then go see an attorney and take those documents with you. They will help you register foreign-invested company. If they ask you to bring the company's certificate of a registered seal or my personal certificate of a registered seal, just let me know."

"Yes, sir."

The preparation to start a joint venture was going well.

Jong-Suk Park came into Gun-Ho's office.

"Don't you think we should have beaten Dong-Hwan Kim up the other day?"

"That was enough. We don't use violence."

"We should show them why they shouldn't have attacked us in the first place and show them what would happen if they try it again."

"We don't have to. You will see. Egnopak's president will come to see me soon."

"Do you really think so?"

"Of course. I am 100% certain. He has always settled any problem with money so far, but he knows that won't work with me. So he will come to see me."

"What are you going to do if he comes?"

"I will elicit practical benefits from him. That's the path I chose as a businessman."

"Well, I don't know what you are talking about. You do what you have to do, bro."

Gun-Ho went to Asan City to visit the construction site, where infrastructure construction work was being conducted for his new factory for the joint venture.

Director Yoon walked out of a container office and ran toward Gun-Ho when he saw Gun-Ho. He was wearing a safety helmet.

"I see the soil excavation is in progress. They have done a lot of work already."

"They are driving piles into the ground right now. The soil is softer than the one in Jiksan Town, so they need to drive the piles deeper."

"Really? This still cannot be compared to the ones in China. When the Jinxi Industrial Park was constructed in China, the piles were driven really deep into the ground."

"Haha. Of course. The elevation of the east coast side of China is below 5 meters."

"Once the infrastructure construction work is completed, constructing a building on the flat land shouldn't take long, right?"

"That's right. It will take about the same time as the time taken for the factory in Jiksan Town."

"We are constructing the factory according to the design drawing made in the U.S. Will it make building a factory more difficult?"

"It could, but I don't see much of a difference."

"Well, I hope everything goes well."

Two dandy men in a business suit came to see Gun-Ho. The secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park—entered Gun-Ho's office to let him know.

"Sir, there are two men who want to see you."

"Who are they?"

"They said they are from Egnopak's legal department."

Gun-Ho smiled and said,

"Tell them that I won't see them and ask them to leave."

Ms. Hee-Jeong Park conveyed what Gun-Ho just said to them. The two men from Egnopak's legal department waited for Gun-Ho outside his office for a while before they eventually left.

Gun-Ho then received a call from the detective.

"We are done with our investigation. We will send the offenders to the prosecutor's office tomorrow. You haven't made any settlement with the assailants yet, have you?"

"I don't intend to make any settlement with them. The Dong-Hwan Kim person must pay for what he did."

"Dong-Hwan Kim is on probation right now. Once he is sent to the prosecutor's office, he won't be able to avoid prison time."

"He should have been more careful if he was on probation."

"Right. Haha. Well, we will just handle the case as the law dictates."

Gun-Ho called for Jong-Suk Park.

"People from the Egnopak's legal department just came to see me because of Dong-Hwan Kim."

"Bro, are you going to settle? You should not!"

"I won't, but I think you should settle with them though."

"I don't want to."

"If they offer good settlement money, you should take it."

"No, I won't. My injury certificate indicates that my injury requires only three weeks for recovery. I don't think I can get a lot of money for it."

"Just take it. And then, you will have to leave for the U.S. soon."

"To the U.S.?"

"According to the joint venture contract, we will have to send three engineers to Dyeon for a month. They will train them. I am thinking of selecting two people from the research center, and I want you to join them."

"I can't even speak English."

"It's okay. If you need to communicate in English, you can hire someone who can, in Seattle."

"I don't know, bro. I've never been to the U.S., and I've been wanting to visit there someday actually..."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"That's good. Go with them to the U.S. and get trained. You do that after you accept their settlement offer."

"You do whatever that looks suitable for me and for us. I don't know what you are planning with the incident, and you are always two or three steps ahead of any of us."

The secretary, Hee-Jeong Park, entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Sir, umm... Someone from Egnopak's legal department is here to see you again."

"Did they send the same men who came here before?"

"No. The man who is waiting for you now is not the same man who came before. He really wanted to see you, and he gave his business card."

Gun-Ho looked at the business card that Ms. Hee-Jeong Park handed to him.

"Attorney? This is the attorney who is leading the Egnopak's legal department. Should I ask him to leave? Or maybe I should hear what he would say?"

While Gun-Ho was thinking, he asked Ms. Hee-Jeong Park to let him in.

A man who was wearing glasses came into Gun-Ho's office. He looked two or three years older than Gun-Ho.

"I am the team leader of Egnopak's legal department."

"What brought you here to see me? Why don't you have a seat first?"

The legal team's leader said while sitting on a chair,

"I came here to talk about Mr. Dong-Hwan Kim's case. I hope you could just let it go."

"That Dong-Hwan Kim guy should pay for what he did."

"He has been through a lot by now. I am hoping you could just forgive him."

"I can't do that. Please leave."

"Mr. Dong-Hwan Kim is on probation. If he can't settle this, he will be arrested. Please show him mercy. He must know by now what he did was wrong."

"He should have been more cautious given his situation. Well, I can't just let it go."

"Our president sent you a settlement offer. This is not a huge amount of money, but please accept it and sign the settlement agreement."

"Are you kidding me? I don't need money."

"I know. As a matter of fact, I told our president that offering money wouldn't be a good idea, but our president wanted to show you his effort to make this work."

"Why money? It would make more sense if he came here with a baseball bat instead. I read in a newspaper that he once did that when Dong-Hwan Kim was involved in an assault at a bar. They are so immature."

Gun-Ho clicked his tongue, and the attorney scratched his head. He must have felt embarrassed.

Gun-Ho then asked the attorney.

"So how much did your great president send me as a settlement offer?"

"It's 10 million won."

"Well, since I am rich already and I don't need any more money, you can give it to another victim, Jong-Suk Park. I can ask him to come here to accept that settlement offer."

"No, umm... This settlement offer was intended for you, President Goo..."

"I don't have time to hear any more BS. Just leave my office! I will call security if you don't leave now."

"Sir, putting him behind bars is not the best solution. He is probably regretting what he had done by now."

"You go tell your Egnopak president. I won't accept anything until he comes to

me and beg for mercy. And you should leave now."

Egnopak's attorney was blushing while he was sitting in the office.

"You should leave!"

Gun-Ho yelled at him.

The attorney had no other choice but to leave Gun-Ho's office.

262 Job Appointment 1 – PART 1

Gun-Ho asked for the chief officer of the research center.

"Please select two smart engineers at the research center. We will send them to Dyeon to receive training on chemical compounds."

"Can I select someone who is currently working in another department?"

"Sure. It doesn't matter. We just need people who have great potential to be one of the top engineers."

"I suppose we also need to consider whether the person would stay with us for the long-term. We don't want to train someone who would leave the company soon."

"Hmm."

"If the person left for one of our competitor companies either in Korea or in China after he receives necessary training from Dyeon and gains relevant work experience after he returns to our company, then that could incur a tremendous loss to our company."

"You're right. We will need to take that into account as well in selecting the engineers for the training."

"The new chief officer is coming to work next Monday. I will consider this task as my last work here as a research center's chief officer before I hand over my work to the new chief officer."

Gun-Ho received a report from the assistant manager of the general affairs department that he completed registration work for the new joint venture.

Gun-Ho started carrying out a large-scale job appointment within GH Mobile. At first, Gun-Ho appointed the plant manager and the research center's chief officer to a one-year advisory position since they both reached their retirement age. The chief officer of the research center would work with the newly formed joint venture—Deyon Korea; he would provide technical advice within the company.

The plant manager would join Min-Hyeok Kim in China, and he would work at GH Parts Company in Suzhou City, China for a year.

There were a few employees who received their promotions: the sales director, the general affairs manager, production manager, construction director, etc. The letter of appointment was delivered to each department, and it was posted on the announcement board as well.

1. Advisory Position

Plant Manager, Man-Soo Li ----- Advisory position (1 year) GH Parts Company in Suzhou City, China

Research Center's Chief Officer, Gil-Hoon Bang ----- Advisory position (1 year) Dyeon Korea

2. Promotion

Sales Director, Dong-Chan Kim ----- Managing Director (Relocation to Dyeon Korea)

Construction Director, Hee-Byeong Yoon ----- Managing Director

General Affairs Manager, Joon-Young Choi ----- Director (General Affairs Team)

Production Manager, Jong-Suk Park ----- Director (Production Team)

Assistant Manager of General Affairs, Chang-Hoon Seo ----- Manager (Relocation to Sales Team)

3. New Hire

Chief Officer of Research Center, Joon-Soo Oh ----- Director Level

Gun-Ho proceeded the job appointment within GH Development in Seoul as well.

Manager, Seong-Il Kang ----- Director

General Affairs, Ji-Young Jeong ----- Assistant Manager

March 1, 201x. President, Gun-Ho Goo.

The ones who were promoted were extremely happy because the promotion would make a significant change in their benefits. First of all, their salary would be raised dramatically.

They were requested to come to Gun-Ho's office, and the general affairs director—Joon-Young Choi—led them to the president's office.

Gun-Ho had a handshake with every single one of them and congratulated them for their job promotion.

"I should actually have promoted all of you earlier. All I want from you is to work hard as you have always done."

"We will do our best, sir."

"And I want to introduce you to our new chief officer at the research center. He obtained his Ph.D. in Munich, Germany, and he worked at the research center with BMW, Hyundai and other companies, as a lead researcher."

"Hello, everyone. My name is Joon-Soo Oh."

After the new chief officer of the research center was introduced, Gun-Ho looked at the plant manager and the former research center's chief officer and said,

"Mr. Plant Manager, why don't you start working in China after a month? Director Jong-Suk Park will have to take a leave for a month in order to receive training in the U.S. I think you should stay here until he comes back."

"Yes, sir."

"Also, the new building of the joint venture is still under construction. It will take another three months to complete the building. For those of you who are relocated to work there, you can stay here until the new factory is ready."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I congratulate all of you once again."

"Thank you."

The workers who were just promoted gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho before they left the president's office.

The news about the recent job appointment within GH Mobile and GH Development traveled quickly and reached Min-Hyeok Kim in China and GH Media. It seemed that the general affairs management department sent the announcement to them as well.

Min-Hyeok Kim gave a call to Gun-Ho right away.

"I've read the announcement about the job appointment, and I just gave a call to Jong-Suk to congratulate him on his promotion."

"What did he say? Is he happy?"

"Well, he said he feels a heavy burden on his shoulders because he thinks he is too young to be a director. Oh, and he said he is leaving for the U.S. soon."

"Yeah. He will receive training from Dyeon."

"I am sure he will do great. He is very loyal; he will assist you for a long time as your right-hand man, President Goo."

"Thank you."

"Is the plant manager coming here soon?"

"He will join you a month later because Jong-Suk won't be here for a month for his training, so we need the plant manager during Jong-Suk's absence."

"I am hoping to have him here as soon as possible. We have many machines and equipment that require his attention and care."

"Once the plant manager joins you, make sure the workers in China learn a lot of things from him."

"I know. I already told them to get ready."

"Once Dyeon Korea's factory is completed, you will need to form a separate

entity to handle the sales of Dyeon Korea's products. Well, I think you'd better start preparing now. You will have a stock option of 5% for the new sales company, of course."

"Thank you."

"We don't say that between friends."

"Oh, I am getting married next month in Shanghai in a Chinese style. If you could come, I would really appreciate it."

"And you will have another wedding in Korea, too?"

"Yes, we will have a wedding in Incheon, too. I have relatives and my parents' friends to invite to our wedding."

"You are lucky enough to have two weddings. I am so envious of you."

"You don't have to. It is a very tiring process."

"That is happy tiring. Well, I gotta go."

As Gun-Ho anticipated, Egnopak's president came to see him in person. He brought four people with him, including the in-house attorney who was leading Egnopak's legal team.

Egnopak's president—Seung-Gak Kim—looked around Gun-Ho's new factory in Jiksan Town, and he said,

"The factory is larger than I expected, and it is very neat. Well, it's not bad at all."

Egnopak's president entered the company with his personnel. The general affairs department and the sales team were informed by the security office that Egnopak's president just arrived.

The newly promoted managing director, Mr. Kim, ran to the front entrance. He had known the Egnopak's president for quite a long time. He had met him several times for Mulpasaneop's business.

"President Kim, sir."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Oh, you are Director Kim from Mulpasaneop."

Someone poked Director Kim.

"I am the managing director now of GH Mobile."

"Oh, I see."

Egnopak's president extended his thick hand to Director Kim for a handshake.

"Is President Gun-Ho Goo in the office?"

"Yes, he is. We received a call from Egnopak's secretary's office that you will be visiting us, so President Gun-Ho Goo is expecting you."

Egnopak's president entered Gun-Ho's office as Director Kim showed him to. Gun-Ho quickly stood up when he saw Egnopak's president coming into his office.

"I'm the president of Egnopak."

"Good to see you, sir. And thank you for visiting our small and humble factory."

Egnopak's president sat on a chair.

"Why don't you all have a seat, too."

Egnopak's president told his four workers who accompanied him. He acted as if he owned the company.

263 Job Appointment 1 – PART 2

"I came to apologize to you for my son's behavior. You should understand that I am a father. Even though my son did something wrong, I can't see him going to prison as his father."

"We have plenty of time to talk about it, sir. I'd like to serve you a cup of tea first; you are a guest to my company."

Gun-Ho asked his secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park—to bring green tea. Gun-Ho also called for Director Jong-Suk Park at that moment.

Egnopak's president continued to talk.

"I was told a two-week injury certificate was issued. Since you are not seriously injured, let's finalize the incident."

"How do you want to finalize it?"

"I know you have enough money, President Goo. But money is still a valid means to settle this sort of thing."

At that moment, Director Jong-Suk Park entered Gun-Ho's office. Gun-Ho said to him,

"Director Park, roll up your left-arm sleeve."

Jong-Suk rolled up his sleeve. The injury on his forearm appeared. It was almost healed, but it left a big and ugly scar.

"He was cut with a sashimi knife. If we didn't successfully escape, the gangsters, who your son sent to us, would have poked either our belly or our eyes, and that would make both of us disabled for the rest of our lives."

"Hmm."

Egnopak's president seemed to feel uncomfortable while looking at Jong-Suk's scar. He turned his head to the other side, so he didn't have to look at the scar

again.

"How come you didn't bring your baseball bat today, sir?"

"Hey, President Goo! Are you being sarcastic with me here?"

"You said earlier that you wanted to settle for some money. How much are you offering?"

"Since two people were injured, I am offering 10 million won for each person. So, it will be 20 million won in total."

Egnopak's in-house attorney chipped in.

"This offer price is more than usual given the customary practice in settling this kind of incident with a two-week injury certificate. If you don't accept our president's offer, we will have to deposit the settlement offer with a court."

Without responding to the attorney's elaboration, Gun-Ho looked at Jong-Suk and said,

"Director Park, you take their offer. The president is showing his effort to make it work, anyway. But I won't accept this offer for my own injury."

"Look, President Goo. I have already apologized to you earlier. I know that you don't need this money, but this is the only thing we can offer. This is the first time in my entire 60-year life, apologizing to someone."

"Why don't you show us the settlement agreement? And give 10 million won to Director Park. Jong-Suk, you should sign the settlement agreement."

Jong-Suk signed the settlement agreement that the attorney handed to him, and Jong-Suk took the envelope with 10 million won in it.

"Good. President Goo, let's settle your case too."

"I don't want to, sir. There is no guarantee that you wouldn't do it again. Maybe you will obstruct my business for the joint venture or attempt to lynch me again."

"I guarantee there won't be anything like this ever again."

"No. The 10 million won that you are offering to me is the amount of money that will not do anything to me. I know you are richer than me, but I have several 100 billion won. I don't need 10 million won."

"Come on. I am desperately asking you to settle for it."

"I can't."

The attorney, who was leading Egnopak's legal team, chipped in again.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Then, we will have to deposit this offer with a court. Once we do, a prosecutor or a court will review the case in favor of our side."

"Then you do what you have to do."

Silence filled the air for a while.

It was Egnopak's president who broke the silence.

"You tell me what you want from me."

"You will need to show me something that will make me willing to sign the settlement agreement."

"I already apologized to you when I first came into your office today."

"I accept your apology, of course."

"Hmm."

Egnopak's president closed his mouth for a while with his arms crossed. He looked so upset. He was frowning.

No one in the office said even a word for a while, including the three personnel who accompanied Egnopak's president, GH Mobile's managing director, and Director Jong-Suk Park. It was a deafening silence with only some coughing

sound from time to time.

"Let's do this."

Egnopak's president broke the silence.

Everyone in the room looked at Egnopak's president.

"All these things happened because of the formation of the joint venture, so I will give you some support for your joint venture."

The president then took a sip of his green tea. The tea was already cold.

"Considering another incident with Mandong Company, our company can buy raw materials from your new joint venture—Dyeon Korea—instead of buying them from Mandong Company."

The director, Dong-Chan Kim, looked at Egnopak's president with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Egnopak uses BASF products (BASF: a German chemical company and one of the largest chemical producers in the world) for their raw materials, which are supplied by Mandong Company. Are you saying you can change the materials with Dyeon Korea's products?"

"That's right."

Gun-Ho closed his eyes with his arms crossed.

"We are currently purchasing BASF products worth 500 million won on a monthly basis from Mandong Company. It's 6 billion won per year. What do you think, President Goo? Is that good enough?"

"Hmm."

"You don't need to think about it, President Goo. This is a really good offer. Mr. Legal Team Leader, take out the settlement agreement."

The attorney pulled out the settlement agreement and placed it on the table in front of Gun-Ho.

"Come on! Please sign the settlement."

Egnopak's president acted friendly with Gun-Ho. He grabbed Gun-Ho's hand and led to the agreement.

"Okay, sir. Since you insist, I think I should accept your offer. I don't want to be rude to you, sir."

Gun-Ho finally signed the settlement agreement.

The managing director smiled broadly and went to Egnopak's president.

"You made the right decision, sir. Dyeon Korea's products will be very competitive, especially in price compared to BASF's products. You will be pleased."

And then, the sales director went out quickly and came back with a purchase agreement.

"Sir, please sign this."

Egnopak's president signed the purchase agreement without hesitation.

Egnopak's president was highly experienced. Even though he took over his family's business, he spent tens of years to run the business until now. He was gaining a lot from this settlement as well business-wise, such as that he wouldn't have to purchase expensive BASF products anymore because he could replace their necessary raw materials with Dyeon Korea's products. Also, by disconnecting his business relation with Mandong Company, he wouldn't have to deal with the fact that he previously pressured Mandong Company to file a lawsuit against GH Mobile.

Gun-Ho also took a very smart move. Even though he was beaten up by a gangster and had four stitches on his face, he gained something very valuable for his business. The new joint venture already established a major client even before the company would open its business.

The managing director, who was recently promoted from the sales director position, entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Your settlement with Egnopak was one of the best moves I've ever seen, sir."

264 Job Appointment 2 – PART 1

The president of GH Media—Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin gave a call to Gun-Ho after she received the announcement of GH Mobile's recent job appointment.

"How do you want me to handle the job appointment of GH Media, sir?"

"President Shin, you handle GH Media's job appointment. I won't get involved in it."

"GH Media is a startup company. It's way too early for us to do any job appointment or relocation at this point. I am thinking of adjusting our employees' salaries by reflecting inflation and pay increase."

"It's your decision, President Shin."

"I am planning to raise GH Media's employees' salaries by 7%. Fortunately, the Japanese translated book—'the person who wakes up in the morning' is selling very well now. It maintains steady sales."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Haha. Well, again, it is totally up to you, President Shin."

"And we made a contract for the sale of the world history cartoon series of thirty books which is very popular in Amazon.com. The people in the publishing industry are astonished by the contract because of the amount we invested in it. But I am certain that we will succeed in selling this cartoon series. We already started translating the first and second books of the series."

"Hmm, really?"

"Also, your salary was being sent to you starting this month as a managing director of GH Media. I am not sure if you verified it."

"Really? I will check it later."

"Once we raise our employees' salaries by 7%, your pay will increase accordingly as well. Haha."

"Haha. That sounds right. Well, keep up the good work."

When Gun-Ho got off the phone with President Shin, Director Jong-Suk Park entered the office.

"What's up?"

"Haha. This 10 million won is a windfall for me. I never expected to get this kind of money."

"Oh, you mean the settlement money from Egnopak's president?"

"Yeah. Well, if I can make 10 million won by getting 16 stitches on my body, I want to be beaten up once again."

"You are crazy."

"Half of this is yours, bro. You didn't get any money for your injury. Here, take it."

"You are indeed a crazy man. Take it back to your pocket."

"You spent a lot of money when we went to Seoul last time to see Egnopak's president's son. You bought a drink to Tae-Young Im and others and you also gave them some money too."

"It's nothing. I just bought them some drinks, that's it. That 10 million won is yours, you deserve to take it all. Get some good food with that money so you can recover quickly. It will also be useful when you get to the U.S."

Gun-Ho headed to Asan City to the construction site of Dyeon Korea's factory. He used to drive to Jiksan Town from Asan City to visit the construction site when the current GH Mobile's factory was being constructed in Jiksan Town, but now he was driving to Asan City from Jiksan Town to see another new factory being built up in Asan City.

At the construction site, Managing Director Dong-Chan Kim was there. Director

Dong-Chan Kim was recently promoted from a sales director position and he was appointed to the Dyeon Korea location as a managing director.

"Sir, you came."

"Oh, you are here too. I guess you were wondering how the construction is going since you will be working here soon."

"Right. I am now focusing on Dyeon Korea."

"Dyeon Korea's business is important, of course, however, we still need to focus on GH Mobile. I was told that the sales manager quit GH Mobile because he was not happy with our recent job appointment."

"He won't do well even if he gets another job in another company."

"What about Mr. Chang-Hoon Seo? He is now working in the sales department as a manager."

Manager Chang-Hoon Seo was recently promoted to a manager position in sales. He used to work in the general affairs department as an assistant manager.

"He is doing very well. He should have joined the sales team earlier. He wouldn't have been able to fully use his skills in the general affairs department. He is good-looking and he is very good at communicating with others. He is already very popular among our vendors and customers. He told me that he seemed to have an aptitude for sales."

"Ha, really? That's good to hear."

"Oh, I met with the former vice president of S Group the other day as you asked me to. We had lunch together."

"Where is he living now?"

"He is living in Bundang District now, but he said he will move to Suji in Yongin City soon. It seems that he bought a new house there."

"I see."

"His youngest son is in the first year of high school, and his new house is located in a very good school district."

"School district?"

Gun-Ho smiled bitterly. He thought that since the parents consider a school district as one of the important factors in choosing their residence, the son would be able to get an admission from a decent college within Seoul.

Gun-Ho thought of his high school years for a moment. He didn't want to go to school because he felt so embarrassed by his shabby sneakers. His high school was not even in a nice area.

Gun-Ho then thought of Egnopak's president's son—Dong-Hwan Kim. He didn't look very smart or decent, but he graduated from USC and he was working as a managing director of Egnopak in LA. What about Egnopak's president's daughter? She was a college professor in Suwon City. When Egnopak president's daughter was having an expensive private tutoring when she was in high school, Gun-Ho was working part-time at a convenience store to make money to buy new sneakers. They had a different starting point in life, and the gap in either social status or wealth became bigger and bigger as life went on.

However, Gun-Ho was dealing with Egnopak's president in an equal position. Egnopak's president was someone who Gun-Ho couldn't even talk to, years ago. That was because Gun-Ho had accumulated substantial wealth now.

"You seemed to be lost in thought, sir."

Gun-Ho just woke up when Director Dong-Chan Kim talked to him.

"Oh, I was just thinking of my old days..."

"Sir, I will have to go see a client now."

"Oh, so the S Group's former vice president is still using the same cell phone number, right?"

"Yes, he is keeping the same number."

The three selected workers of GH Mobile came to Gun-Ho's office before they

would leave for the U.S. for the training. They flushed with excitement and also anxiety.

Two workers whom the former chief officer of the research center selected were the lead researcher and senior researcher.

"Dyeon requested us to send our three best workers for training. Accordingly, you have been selected by our directors and managers including the research center's former chief officer."

The three chosen workers were listening to Gun-Ho courteously. Gun-Ho read the personal data of the three workers. Director Jong-Suk Park was 33 years old while the lead researcher was five years older than Jong-Suk, and the senior researcher was one year younger than Jong-Suk. Jong-Suk had extensive hands-on experience in the field, but the other two researchers had way better qualifications based on papers and they were highly knowledgeable in theory.

"Dyeon is a global enterprise. I hope you use this experience wisely to learn their advanced technology and make this opportunity a valuable experience in your life. Well, it seems that the senior researcher studied in the U.S. as an exchange student and he had a TOEIC score of over 900. Mr. Senior Researcher, you probably speak English very well, so please help the lead researcher and the production director during the stay in the U.S."

The young senior researcher rubbed his nose; he seemed to feel shy.

"Well, that will be all. You probably need to start packing. You can go now. Oh, Director Choi, did you already prepare the travel expenses for these workers?"

"Yes. They will calculate the expenses in detail after they return."

"It is good that Dyeon offered to provide an interpreter for our workers. They will communicate with us through GH Development's secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh since she speaks English fluently. Ms. Angelina Rein from Dyeon will be the one who usually contacts us. So, if you need anything, Director Choi, please talk to Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh."

"Understood, sir."

The three workers left Gun-Ho's office after giving him a 90-degree bow.

265 Job Appointment 2 – PART 2

Gun-Ho was a bit concerned.

'I am sending three of our workers to the U.S. for training. One of them is our lead researcher at our research center and he is 38 years old. Another one is the senior researcher who is 32 years old. Jong-Suk is going with them for training and he is 33 years old. Jong-Suk is our production director. The two researchers are in a lower-ranked position than Jong-Suk. The thing is that the two researchers are highly educated, on the other hand, Jong-Suk didn't even finish his college education. I am concerned that they might be jealous of Jong-Suk or feel unfair that Jong-Suk is in a higher position than them, given the fact that he is young and doesn't have a high education degree.'

However, it turned out that Gun-Ho was worrying unnecessarily. The two researchers viewed this trip as an opportunity to get close with Jong-Suk who was very close to their company's president.

'The rumor says that Director Jong-Suk Park is like a brother to our president, he is even closer to the president than his own siblings by blood. Maybe I can get close to Director Jong-Suk Park during this training period. I will have to take every opportunity to stay close to him and do things together with him.'

The workers in the company talked down on Jong-Suk behind his back even though he was a director in the company because he was young in age. However, the same workers acted very friendly with Jong-Suk when they were with him. People tend to act by self-serving when it came to money or power.

Sales Director Kim came into Gun-Ho's office.

"The president of Seongil Polymer is here. He is hoping that he could talk with you, sir."

"Seongil Polymer? The one who filed a lawsuit against us?"

"That's right. He said he wants to withdraw the suit."

"So I guess he changed his mind, huh? Please let him in."

Seongil Polymer's president entered the office.

"Sir, I am so sorry. I made a huge mistake with you."

The president of Seongil Polymer quickly kneeled down on the floor in front of Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was surprised. The president was in his 50s while Gun-Ho was in his mid-30s.

"Don't do this. Please get up. If you have something you want to talk to me about, please have a seat."

After Director Kim helped the Seongil Polymer's president stand up, Gun-Ho smiled and said,

"Seongil Polymer is a creditor company of GH Mobile. You don't do this to your debtor."

"I already withdrew the lawsuit. I didn't think straight when I filed a lawsuit against your company, sir, just because the Egnopak's president asked me to do so. Please forgive me."

"Did you make some sort of deals with Egnopak for the lawsuit?"

"As a matter of fact, yes. Egnopak promised me that they would buy more products from our company if we file a lawsuit against GH Mobile for the debt that GH Mobile owe to us. Our company was recently going through some difficult times, so I thought it would be really nice if I could get cash in a lump sum once we get the payment from GH Mobile, and also if we could sell more products to Egnopak."

"I see. That's why you filed a lawsuit against us, even after you signed the agreement about our payment plan."

"To be honest with you, I figured that you were paying us in installments not because you have no money to pay us at once. I realized that when I learned that you acquired RiverStar Building in Gangnam. Moreover, there is a limited amount of products that Egnopak could buy from us realistically."

"I see."

"Additionally, the president of Egnopak told me that they are getting along with GH Mobile these days, so there is no point for us to be hostile with GH Mobile."

"Sir, you are way older than me and way more experienced than me. You shouldn't act based on shallow decision. I can continue to do business with your company, but the damage is done already."

"I was so stupid. You are indeed a man of generosity."

The Seongil Polymer's president's eyes filled with tears. Gun-Ho looked at Director Kim.

"Director Kim, please help Seongil Polymer's president walk out of the office, and get him some warm tea."

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

Director Kim helped Seongil Polymer's president who was staggering, by holding his arm and walked him out of Gun-Ho's office.

Gun-Ho was having a green tea in his office while taking some rest when the S Group's vice president crossed his mind. He was taking some time off at home without trying to get a job yet.

Gun-Ho made a call to him.

A man picked up the phone; he sounded sleepy.

"Hello?"

"Hi. This is Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile."

"Oh, President Goo. Good to hear from you."

"How have you been doing, sir?"

"I started feeling bored while staying home. So, I was thinking of contacting a headhunter. Some vendor and customer companies of S Group offered me a job but I don't want to work for them."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Since you have extensive job experience in the field, once you contact a headhunter, a lot of companies will start offering you a job."

"Well, I doubt. I am already 56 years old. Many people might consider I am too old to be employed."

"I heard you moved to Suji in Yongin City."

"That's right. My family and I moved here three days ago. We just finished unpacking."

"You must have a lot of stuff since it took three days to unpack."

"We threw out a lot of things during the moving, but there seem to be still tons of stuff once we unpacked our boxes. This apartment that we just moved in is 60 pyung large and it looked really big when we first saw it. But now it doesn't look that large at all with all our furniture and stuff in it."

"I believe it takes only 30 minutes if you take a highway from Suji, Yongin City to be here in Jiksan Town. Since you finished moving, what do you say if I ask you to have lunch with me? What about tomorrow? I've found a really nice restaurant in this area. Many people come by that restaurant after playing golf."

"Tomorrow... I'm good, but you must be busy, President Goo."

"I'm good too. Why don't you come to the area and have lunch with me? I want to show you our new factory in Jiksan Town too."

"Sure. Sounds good. I will get there by noon tomorrow."

"Haha. I will be waiting for you, sir."

Gun-Ho went to a bar after work to have some beer. The bar was located next to the KTX Station of Asan City, Cheonan. It was close to his home. He received a call from Jong-Suk while he was having a beer there.

"Bro? It's me. We just arrived at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport."

"Did you already meet with the interpreter who Dyeon sent?"

"Yes. We are on our way to the downtown altogether."

"I hope you have a valuable time there. You will learn some advanced technology of Dyeon there."

"I can't believe I am in the U.S. Because of you, I could come this far, bro. I guess I can consider myself as a successful man."

"Enjoy while you can, and teach yourself well while you can."

266 Tokyo Planning 1 – Part 1

Gun-Ho was heading to his work when his Land Rover was running out of gas. Gun-Ho stopped by at a gas station in Baekseok Town, Cheonan City to fill up the tank of his car. He was heading out when he received a call from S Group's former vice president.

"President Goo? I'm afraid that I will have to take a rain check for our lunch appointment today."

"Something happened?"

"One of my close relatives just passed away. He was in Seoul National University Bundang Hospital. Since he didn't have any children, I will have to handle everything for him."

"I am so sorry to hear it. We can have our lunch at any time, sir."

"Me too. I know that you are a busy man, and I know you make time today for me."

"No, it's okay, really. When everything gets settled, just let me know, so we can have our lunch then."

Gun-Ho was reading a newspaper in his office when the directors and managers started pouring into his office.

"Oh, that's right. Today is a meeting day."

The managers and directors in uniform were all carrying a note with them for the meeting. It was the first meeting for the new chief officer of the research center; he joined the meeting instead of the former chief officer. Without the former chief officer and former plant manager, the members of the executive group looked more vibrant and young overall.

A total of five members attended the meeting today: Sales Director Dong-Chan Kim, Construction Director Hee-Byeong Yoon, General Affairs Director Joon-Young Choi, the new research center's chief officer— Joon-Soo Oh, and Internal

Auditor Hee-Suk Goh. Director Jong-Suk Park couldn't attend the meeting since he was in the U.S. for training.

"Let's get started with the sales report. We will hear the report from the general affairs department later."

As Gun-Ho instructed, the sales director started giving a report.

"We are ordering raw materials from Seongil Polymer once again for the products, T-Cap that we provide to H Mobis. We have sold 50,000 of them last week, and the total sales revenue is..."

Gun-Ho looked at his watch and the sales director took it as a sign that he was making Gun-Ho feel bored. The sales director started wrapping up his report. After the sales report was done, the construction director and the chief officer of the research center gave their reports by turns as well. Receiving reports by itself took about an hour. Gun-Ho made some comments on them from time to time.

"The plant manager in the production department is now in an advisory position and the production director, Jong-Suk Park is in the US for training. So, please visit the production department in turns while their director and manager are absent."

"Yes, sir."

"I had worked at a production department as an apprentice years ago, and I know, from my personal experience, that the production field could become slow when there is no one supervising it."

"We will take turns in supervising the production field until Director Park comes back."

Once the meeting was over, a bunch of reports piled up on Gun-Ho's desk waiting for his approval. Gun-Ho didn't review all of them thoroughly but he sometimes read just the title of a report before he signed it.

Around 10 AM, Gun-Ho usually started reading an economic newspaper or watching the news on his smartphone, after reviewing the reports and signing them. That day, Gun-Ho was watching the news with his smartphone when he received a call from Tokyo. It was Ji-Yeon Choi—the restaurant owner in

Akasaka, Tokyo.

"President Goo? It's really hard to get in touch with you these days. It seems that you haven't come to Tokyo recently."

"I've been really busy with my factory work. I know I should visit Tokyo soon."

"I can tell that you have been really busy there since I am reading a Korean newspaper from here too. I am aware that you will soon start a joint venture with the American company, Dyeon and also you acquired RiverStar Building in Gangnam."

"I see."

"But you have Mori Aikko here who you have to take care of. You can't just let her be here by herself all the time."

"Haha. I will make time to visit her soon."

"I received a call this morning from Mama-san Segawa Joonkko of the bar in Shinjuku."

"What did she say?"

"She said Mori Aikko is in a hospital right now."

"What? Is she okay? Is it serious?"

"She got a kidney stone or something. I forgot the exact word already. President Goo, if you can't come to visit her to the hospital, call her at least."

"I will go see her right away. Thank you for letting me know."

Gun-Ho called for his secretary, Hee-Jeong Park immediately.

"I will need a flight ticket to Tokyo, Japan. I will leave tomorrow. I don't need a travel visa, so just reserve a flight ticket leaving tomorrow."

"Yes, sir."

When Gun-Ho arrived in Japan, he first stopped by New Otani Hotel in

Akasaka, Tokyo and reserved a room for himself. He wanted to leave his luggage at the hotel before going to see Mori Aikko at a hospital. Gun-Ho first went to the restaurant in Akasaka which Ms. Ji-Yeon Choi was running; he was carrying cosmetics that he purchased at the duty-free shop at the airport. But Ms. Ji-Yeon Choi was not there. Gun-Ho left the cosmetics with a staff at the restaurant and made a call to her.

"President Choi? I just came to your restaurant and you are not here. Do you have the name of the hospital where Mori Aikko is at?"

"Hahaha. You came so fast because your lover is sick. Give me one moment; I will find it out for you."

After a moment, Gun-Ho received a call from President Choi.

"It's Tokyo Women's Medical University Hospital. She is in the room no. 1206. Her examination was done, and she will have an operation today."

"Where is Tokyo Women's Medical University Hospital?"

"It's in Kawadacho, Shinjuku. Why don't you take a taxi? All taxi drivers should know where that hospital is."

"Sounds good. Thank you."

Gun-Ho arrived at Tokyo Women's Medical University Hospital, and he headed to the patient's room no. 1206. When Gun-Ho entered the room, Mori Aikko was reading a cartoon book on a bed in a half-sitting position. Mama-san Segawa Joonkko was there too. She was looking at her smartphone while sitting next to Mori Aikko.

"Mori Aikko!"

"Oppa?!"

Mama-san stood up and greeted Gun-Ho as well.

"You came."

"I must look so ugly now. I didn't even wash my face today."

"Don't worry about it. You are always pretty."

Mama-san chipped in,

"Her surgery is scheduled at 3 pm today. After the doctor who has been taking care of Mori Aikko completes his ambulatory care duty, he will start her surgery."

"Is she seriously ill?"

Mama-san said some words describing Mori Aikko's illness, but Gun-Ho couldn't understand the word. When Mama-san realized Gun-Ho couldn't understand the Japanese word of that illness, she wrote corresponding Chinese characters on the cartoon book which Mori Aikko was reading. It said kidney stones.

"Oh, kidney stones!"

Gun-Ho nodded his head showing he now understood.

Gun-Ho looked around the hospital room where Mori Aikko was staying at. She was sharing the room with several other patients and the room didn't seem to help Mori Aikko take a good rest.

"Let's move her to a first-class hospital room."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Mama-san nodded her head.

Once Mama-san left the room, Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko left alone. Gun-Ho held Mori Aikko's small hand.

"You will be fine."

"I know."

"They just need to take out stones from your kidney. No big deal."

Aikko nodded her head.

267 Tokyo Planning 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho felt like other patients in the room kept staring at him and Mori Aikko, so he closed the curtains to have some privacy. Mori Aikko handed an album to him.

Gun-Ho opened the album to find the pictures of Mori Aikko in Kimono. She was posing for pictures on a bridge and in a bamboo grove. In one of the photos, she was looking up to the sky with an umbrella in her hand.

"It's a pictorial book made to attract more visitors to the park. The pictures were taken in Arashiyama, Kyoto."

"Really? You look so beautiful."

Gun-Ho kissed on the pictures of the photo album.

After having lunch, Aikko fell asleep, and Gun-Ho left the room quietly and took a walk on the street. After visiting the Gekkoji temple nearby, Gun-Ho hurriedly came back to the hospital. It was almost 3 pm when Mori Aikko's surgery would start. Aikko was still sleeping in the room.

Her surgery didn't take long. It was simple, short and painless. It was laparoscopic surgery performed under anesthesia. Once the surgery was completed, the nurses moved Mori Aikko to a first-class room as Gun-Ho previously requested. Gun-Ho kept watching Mori Aikko's face while sitting next to her bed before he eventually fell asleep.

How long did he sleep? Gun-Ho opened his eyes and looked at Mori Aikko. She was still asleep. She looked pale. She looked like the sleeping Snow White in a children's storybook. Gun-Ho lightly pressed his lips against hers. At that very moment, someone knocked on the door. Gun-Ho was frightened and jumped out of his chair.

"I brought the patient's meal."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease

click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Aikko opened her eyes when she heard someone talking. Her meal was clear-colored porridge prepared by the hospital.

"How are you feeling? Are you feeling any pain?"

"No, I'm okay."

"Get some of this porridge. You have to eat something."

Gun-Ho spoon-fed Aikko, and Aikko ate her porridge as if she was a baby bird being fed by her mother.

The next morning, Gun-Ho woke up in his New Otani Hotel room in Akasaka. It was already after 9 am.

"It's already 9 am. What time did I come back to the hotel last night?"

Gun-Ho quickly put some clothes on and headed to the restaurant in the hotel.

"I must have been really exhausted yesterday."

Gun-Ho had some white-rice porridge and some fruits before walking out of the restaurant.

The hotel already started being crowded. Gun-Ho could see a lot of men in a business suit in the lobby. There was a sign right next to the stairs; it said 'conference room,' and those men in a suit followed the sign and went upstairs.

"Tsuru? Maybe it is the name of the conference room."

There was a room with a sign—Tsuru (a crane) on it, and the door was slightly open. Gun-Ho looked inside the room. There was a huge banner hanging on the wall. It said,

[Year 201x OO Group's New Executives' Orientation]

"Hmm. This company is doing an orientation for their new executives here. Well, I heard that the founder of Samsung, Byung-Chul Lee used to have a meeting for his branch offices' presidents here in Tokyo pretty often."

Gun-Ho came back to his room and had a cup of coffee while looking out the window. He could see Japan's State Guest House.

"The founder of Samsung, Byung-Chul Lee used to come to Tokyo at the end of every year and make a plan for the next year. People call it Tokyo Planning. I read it from some newspaper."

Gun-Ho was lost in thought while having a cup of coffee.

'GH Mobile, GH Development, Dyeon Korea, and GH Media... How am I going to operate all of these companies?

Once Dyeon Korea opens its door, I will have to hire at least 100 workers for it. It will add another huge group of people to my employees. What am I going to do with them... As GH Mobile brings more and more sales revenues, each department started demanding more workers. The number of employees of my companies keeps increasing.

However, none of my companies have a unique product or invented product. Can a company survive for 10 or 20 years without its own patented product?'

Gun-Ho took out a cigarette and started smoking, then cast his stare out of the window again. He looked just like President Byung-Chul Lee when he was planning for his companies for the next year.

Gun-Ho was deeply lost in thought; he even forgot to smoke but he was just holding a cigarette. After a while, he nodded his head as if he made up his mind.

No one knew what Gun-Ho planned for his companies while he stayed in Tokyo.

Gun-Ho headed to Kawadacho, Shinjuku where Tokyo Women's Medical University Hospital was located in. When he entered Mori Aikko's hospital room, he saw Aikko reading a cartoon book in her bed just like she had been yesterday. Mama-san Segawa Joonkko was looking at her smartphone sitting next to Aikko, just like yesterday.

"Oppa."

Aikko greeted Gun-Ho when she saw him entering the room.

"I just talked with the nurses on the way here. They said your surgery was successful."

Mama-san said while standing up from her seat.

"If we get cooked rice instead of porridge for Aikko's meal after three days, then that is the time we can go home."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho came close to Aikko and held her hand, and said,

"I have to go now. I have too much work waiting for me in Korea. I will come to see you again soon after I finish those work."

Aikko looked sad but she nodded her head.

Gun-Ho then took out an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"I want you to use this for Aikko's medical bills."

Mama-san was frightened when she looked inside the envelope.

"This is way more than her medical bills."

"Well, once she is released from the hospital, she will need to have a lot of good food to fully recover and to be recharged."

"You are leaving now like that? Give her a kiss at least. You can't just leave her after only holding her hand."

Gun-Ho gave Aikko a kiss on her cheek.

When Gun-Ho arrived at Gimpo International Airport, he headed to his GH Building in Sinsa Town. The security guard in the building quickly ran out of his desk and greeted Gun-Ho, and pressed the elevator's button for Gun-Ho.

There seemed to be heavy traffic in the building. When some of the building's occupants tried to get into the elevator which Gun-Ho was in, the security guard chased them out, by saying,

"We are currently testing this elevator. Please take another one."

Gun-Ho and the security guard were the only ones who took that elevator. While they were inside the elevator, Gun-Ho told him,

"Next time, don't do it. Let others take the elevator with me. It's okay. Because of those people, our company can go on."

"I will keep that in mind, sir."

When Gun-Ho appeared at the GH Development's office, the workers ran towards Gun-Ho to greet him. Gun-Ho came to his large office and sat on his chair when his secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh followed him to his office.

"Could you get me a cup of warm green tea?"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, and please call Dyeon and ask Ms. Angelina Rein how our workers are doing there. Tell her that I asked you to ask her about it."

"Okay, sir."

At that moment, Director Kang hastily came into Gun-Ho's office.

"Sir, you came."

"Yes, I was on my way from Japan. How's everything going here?"

"All good, sir. Nothing special."

Director Kang left Gun-Ho's office shortly and came back with a pile of documents.

"What are those?"

"These are the reports for your review, sir."

"I am so tired today. I will take a look at them tomorrow."

"Yes, sir."

After Director Kang left Gun-Ho's office and when Gun-Ho was in his office by himself, he started thinking quietly about how he was going to execute his plan that he made during his stay in Tokyo

268 Tokyo Planning 2 – Part 1

GH Development had the largest invested fund among Gun-Ho's companies by acquiring RiverStar Building in Sinsa Town.

Its capital was 40 billion won and the loan from a bank was 165 billion won. However, this company was generating revenue based on its real estate investment, unlike other companies which require labor as an important part of resources to generate money. Therefore, it was a less risky business.

"Well, this company is just self-sufficient. We get rents from our tenants in the building, and we pay our workers with that income and also pay to the bank for the loan interest."

The good thing by keeping this building is that Gun-Ho appeared to be a wealthy man who owned a very expensive building, and also the value of the land would keep increasing as time goes on.

What about GH Media? Gun-Ho invested 300 million won in this company. It was a small start-up. Well, Gun-Ho recently invested an additional 300 million won in order to allow them to publish a cartoon series on world history, which was very popular in Amazon.com. However, 600 million won was not a substantial amount of money to Gun-Ho, and he wouldn't lose much even if this company would go bankrupt someday. He established this company in case he might have an opportunity to do some entertainment business with China.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The companies that Gun-Ho focused on the most were GH Mobile and Dyeon Korea.

GH Mobile was formerly known as Mulpasaneop. Gun-Ho changed its name to GH Mobile once he acquired the company. Gun-Ho invested approximately 7 billion won into it. Gun-Ho purchased this company from the previous owner—President Se-Young Oh—for 2 billion won and assumed the company's substantial business debt. He later added an additional 3 billion won to pay off

some urgent debts. Additionally, he put another 2 billion won when he decided to build a new factory in Jiksan Town.

For accounting purposes, the additional 3 billion won was recorded as a loan from Gun-Ho to the company, and another 2 billion won was recorded as Gun-Ho put the fund into the company as the president of the entity. So once the company got back on track, Gun-Ho would be able to get those 5 billion won back.

Dyeon Korea was an investment of GH Mobile.

The paid-in capital was 10 million dollars. However, GH Mobile could put 1 million dollars into the joint venture in cash and would invest the rest of the dues in kind by contributing the factory which was being built in Asan City. Dyeon would send in cash worth 500,000 dollars to the joint venture and would provide raw materials and their old equipment as their investment-in-kind. To Dyeon, it wasn't even a huge investment at all. They would record the value of their old equipment higher than they actually were.

The first goal of Gun-Ho's Tokyo planning was that he wanted to register GH Mobile and Dyeon Korea with KOSDAQ.

Even though he probably had to reduce his shares by doing so, making those two companies a KOSDAQ registered company was the only breakthrough he could think of. He, of course, had a lot of cash in hand; he had 170 billion won in his stock account and an additional 4 billion won in his bank account in Gangnam. However, he determined that he would never ever put all he got into his business. That was what he learned bitterly while he was acquiring his company. Putting all he got into a business was the most stupid thing a man could do.

Gun-Ho once asked a few questions to himself and answered those questions by himself.

'Say, an armed robber is asking me to give him my 170 billion won stored in my stock account. Would I give it to him, or would I rather let him kill me? I would let him take my life instead of taking my 170 billion won.'

Gun-Ho then yelled looking up at the sky.

"If someone asks me whether money is more important or a person is more

important, I would say that money is more important than a person. And if someone asks me whether my reputation is more important or my money is more important, I would say my money is more important."

He continued to yell while looking up at the sky,

"If someone reminded me that I wouldn't be able to take my money with me when I die, I would say without hesitation that I will keep my money until the moment I stop breathing."

Gun-Ho remembered what Chairman Lee of Cheongdam Town said when Gun-Ho brought some Jokbal to share with him at the fishing site in Pocheon City.

"These Jokbal look so delicious."

"I bought them from a local restaurant in downtown, Pocheon City. The restaurant is small, but its location is very convenient. You can dine in, and they have a very convenient parking lot for a vehicle or motorcycle. Since the location is excellent, I guess they won't sell the restaurant to anyone, but they will probably pass it on to their children."

Chairman Lee smiled and shook his head.

"You are wrong."

"Huh?"

"The correct answer is... the restaurant owner wouldn't even pass on the restaurant to his children."

Gun-Ho couldn't understand the meaning of it at that moment, but what Chairman Lee said that day had resonated in his mind for a long time.

Speaking of the devil, Gun-Ho received a call from Chairman Lee of Cheongdam Town at that very moment.

"President Goo? Are you in Seoul right now? Or are you in Jiksan Town?"

"I am in Seoul, sir."

"I am actually passing by your GH Building where you are at right now. I am on my way to the Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, St. Mary's Hospital, and you crossed my mind when I saw your building."

"Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, St. Mary's Hospital? Are you ill, sir?"

"No no. Not me. Master Park is in that hospital, who was staying in Goesan Town."

"Master Park, sir?"

"Yes, he is diagnosed with gastric cancer. It's early-stage cancer. It's not even considered serious these days."

"I should visit him at the hospital as well then."

"You don't have to. You are not that close to him, anyway. How's your business?"

"It's doing well, sir."

"That's good to hear. Well, then I guess I have to let you go."

Chairman Lee then hung up the phone.

Gun-Ho went back to his thoughts on how to execute his Tokyo plan.

"In order to register my companies with KOSDAQ, I have to fulfill their requirements such as keeping a certain level of debt ratio and sales revenues and things like that. I had done some accounting work before, but I have never experienced any KOSDAQ registration work."

Gun-Ho thought of GH Mobile's internal auditor, Mr. Hee-Suk Goh. He first came to GH Mobile to oversee the court receivership, and then he decided to stay and work for GH Mobile as Gun-Ho offered him a position.

"He had handled the court receivership of many companies, and he also used to work for a bank as a branch manager. He might have some experience with KOSDAQ registration work. Or maybe not. Should I hire someone who is well familiar with the work?"

At that moment, Gun-Ho recoiled from the thought that S Group's former vice president probably knew well how to do it. Gun-Ho would soon have lunch with him.

"That's right. He used to work as a CEO of a mid-sized firm and a vice president for a large company. He probably has experience with KOSDAQ registration. I will ask him during our next lunch appointment."

Note*

Jokbal – Korean dish made of pig's trotters with soy sauce.

269 Tokyo Planning 2 – Part 2

It was getting dark outside, and it started raining.

"Oh, I didn't bring my car to work today since I came here straight from the airport. I should ask Director Kang to drop me off at my house. I believe that Director Kang is living in Bongcheon Town. If I ask him to give me a ride to my TowerPalace home, he will probably have to make a detour."

Gun-Ho suddenly grabbed his cell phone and made a call to Manager Gweon. Manager Gweon was the one who accompanied Chairman Lee wherever he went to assist him.

"Manager Gweon, how have you been?"

"Oh, President Goo? To what do I owe the pleasure of this call?"

"You are in the Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, St. Mary's Hospital with Chairman Lee, aren't you? What is the room number that Master Park is staying in?"

"It's Building No. 5, Room No. 902. The hospital is located across the street from Gangnam Express Bus Terminal. It's not the Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, St. Mary's Hospital in the Yeouido location."

"Got it. Thank you."

"Are you coming?"

"Maybe."

Gun-Ho called for Director Kang.

"Why didn't you leave for today already?"

"I have some work left for today, sir. I will get off after you leave, sir."

"I didn't bring my car today; I came to work straight from the airport. My car is

in Cheonan City."

"I can give you a ride in my car, sir. It's an old car, but it's still running."

"That would be great. I need to go to the Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, St. Mary's Hospital."

"Oh, someone is in the hospital?"

"Yes, someone I know."

"I live in Bongcheon Town. The hospital is on the way to my home. The traffic will be heavy though since it's raining, and it's the after-work rush-hour. We'd better leave now to avoid the worst rush-hour of the day. The traffic around the Gangnam Express Bus Terminal area should be terrible."

"Let's go then."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho stood up from his seat.

Gun-Ho and Manager Kang got into the elevator together and pressed the button for the ground floor for parking. It was the time when people started getting off work, and the elevator stopped at almost every single floor on the way down. Many people greeted Manager Kang while no one did to Gun-Ho since Gun-Ho didn't know anyone in the building except his office workers.

The elevator arrived at the ground floor—B1. Manager Kang's car was parked at the most convenient parking stall. At that moment, Team Leader Soo-Nam Jeong ran to Manager Kang when he saw Manager Kang at the parking lot, and then he was surprised when he found Gun-Ho standing next to Manager Kang.

"Sir... sir."

"How have you been?"

Gun-Ho offered his hand to him for a handshake and Team Leader Soo-Nam Jeong held Gun-Ho's hand with his two hands and bowed to him. When Gun-Ho

was about to get into the Manager's Kang's car, Team Leader Soo-Nam Jeong opened the door for him.

Manager Kang's car was heading out of GH Building's parking lot when Gun-Ho noticed that Manager Kang's car looked new.

"Did you get a new car? If I remember correctly, you were driving a Sonata. This is a Grandeur."

"Oh, when my old Sonata's timing gear broke, I just sold it and purchased this car. It's a used car with only 60,000 kilometers on it."

"It looks like a brand new car."

"I just thought I'd better drive a good car to maintain the class as a person who is managing a huge building. I am paying for this car in installments."

"You made a good call."

"Sir, have you noticed all those luxurious cars being parked in our building's parking lot? Many of them belong to young people who are working for a company in our building, and they are driving a luxurious car. That's the trend these days. Many young people want to have a luxurious car even though they can't afford to even pay rent."

"Haha. Really?"

The traffic in front of the Gangnam Express Bus Terminal was indeed terrible. Manager Kang's car was just stuck there and moved really slowly. Gun-Ho dozed off in the car until they finally arrived at the hospital.

"Sir! We've arrived."

Gun-Ho stopped by a convenience store inside the hospital before heading to the patient's room where Master Park was staying. He wanted to buy some drinks and fruits.

Master Park was staying in a first-class hospital room. Master Park was with a couple of guests—Chairman Lee of Cheongdam Town and President Park, who sold the building in Sinsa Town to Gun-Ho.

"It's raining outside. You didn't have to come."

Chairman Lee said while standing up from his seat when he saw Gun-Ho entering the room.

"Hi. How are you?"

"Oh, good to see you again."

President Park extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake.

Master Park was in a half-sitting position in the bed, and he was wearing a patient gown. It seemed like they were having a good time while talking about the old days since they were all at a similar age.

"Okay, now we have one more person who is exuding rotting money smell."

When Master Park blurted out, Chairman Lee said to him,

"Don't say it like that. He came all the way here to see you on this rainy day with a fruit basket."

"You have been bragging too much about money. That's why..."

"You can't brag about having no money, can you?"

President Park, who was sitting next to Chairman Lee, chipped in.

"The one with money is a true patriot. Look at President Goo. He is paying high taxes, and he is creating so many jobs for the people of this country."

Chairman Lee said to Master Park again,

"You are staying at a first-class hospital room because you made a lot of money on people who wanted to consult you about their lives and fates. President Goo will make more and more money in the future."

"Ha! YangJeonManGyeon is IlSikYeeSeung, you guys."

"You are saying that even though you have a farm that is as large as ManGyeong, you can only have two meals per day? Having a meal is not all that

people do these days. I make money not just to buy a meal but to achieve something in my life."

"That's why your life is so busy for nothing."

Chairman Lee turned around to see Gun-Ho and said,

"Are you still there? You'd better go home now. You need to go to work tomorrow morning."

"Haha. I was having fun by listening to you, sirs."

"You don't have to listen to that old man."

"I don't know... Whew... How can I enlighten these silly people."

"At our age, what we can do is share our life experience and wisdom to young people. Don't say anything depressing or nonsense."

"Wisdom? Well... then... I recommend reading a lot of books."

"I've been reading many books related to business management."

"Reading a book is the foundation to restore a family."

"Master Park looks so ugly and dumb, but he always has something good to say when sharing the wisdom of life."

"Hello? I'm right here."

Gun-Ho looked at his watch. It was getting late.

"Haha. Well, I guess I'd better go now. I had a great time with you all, sirs. I hope you feel better soon, sir."

Master Park said to Gun-Ho before he left the room,

"Mr. Gun-Ho Goo, work hard and remember that you are the one who is making your own destiny."

"Understood, sir. Thank you."

Gun-Ho walked out of the room after giving the three old men a 90-degree bow. When he walked out of the hospital, the rain had already stopped.

270 Recruit 1 – Part 1

Gun-Ho wanted to discuss the formation of the sales company in China with Min-Hyeok Kim.

Once Dyeon Korea—the joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon—started producing products, they would have to sell them in China.

"Min-Hyeok? Is this a good time to talk?"

"Yes, it's good."

"Once Dyeon Korea starts its business, it will produce products right away. If so, don't you think it would look proper if we sell the products in China with the name GH Parts Company?"

"Well, I suppose... If we form a sales company for it, it would be like we are operating two separate business entities."

"That's right."

"What if we make a distribution center in China for Dyeon Korea?"

"That will diminish the credibility, not to mention the complication with the tax report."

"If we establish a new entity in China, then how about naming it Dyeon China?"

"When we pack our products for sale, we put them in a bag, and each bag weighs about 20 kilograms. And on each bag of the products, we write the weight and the manufacturing company's name just like a rice sack. So it won't be accurate if we put Dyeon China on the product bag since the products are not manufactured in China."

"Let's take some more time in deciding what name the sales company will have. What about the capital? How much are you thinking of investing in that sales company?"

"How much did we invest in GH Parts Company in Suzhou City when we started that company? I don't recall the exact number since it has been a while already."

"It was 300 million won. We initially started that company with 100 million won, and then you added 200 million won to it. And that 200 million won was used to pay for the company debts and unpaid wages."

"Was it enough?"

"Once the company started its business, we began to make money, so it was good. The company is currently selling products for about 300 million won per month. We have 17 customers now."

"Did you say the company has 40 workers right now?"

"It's 42 to be accurate."

"Hmm. We can afford to have that many workers because the business is located in China. If we have to run the same company in Korea and assuming we will make the same sales revenue, we wouldn't be able to have more than 20 workers."

"Of course. Our sales revenue is increasing steadily. I believe the sales revenue will reach 500 million won by the end of this year because we will start selling our new product—AM083 Assembly—to S Group's factory in China starting this month. Also, we will receive the payments from our new customer starting this month; it's a Chinese company, and we are selling them our gaskets. Those payments will count toward our sales revenue."

"Was it 1.7 million dollars that we received from Jinxi Construction Company when we terminated the joint venture with them?"

"It was 1.725 million dollars to be exact."

"So it's about 1.81 billion in Korean won."

"We used 300 million won out of that fund when we opened GH Parts Company. Also, we used 285 million won to purchase the storage for Dyeon Korea. We have about 1.2 billion won left in our bank account."

"Hmm."

"I will think about the name of the company."

"Okay. Let's take some time to think about it."

Gun-Ho received a report on GH Building's profit and loss from Director Kang, and he had the new accounting manager and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong join the meeting.

After receiving the report, Gun-Ho sighed slightly because after paying the loan interest and salary to the workers, not enough funds would be left for the building maintenance reserve and the depreciation cost.

"Let's think about a revenue model. We will need to accumulate enough funds for the building maintenance reserve. Otherwise, we will have to lend money if we encounter unexpected major repair of the building, and that will increase our debt."

"Yes, sir."

"That doesn't mean we are going to raise rents to our current building occupants without any good reason though."

"Understood, sir."

"Director Kang, please keep a close relationship with the realtors in the area. Have lunch with them sometimes."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then headed to Jiksan Town where GH Mobile was located.

He received the reports again from managers and directors for the GH Mobile matters. Once the reporting was completed, Gun-Ho went to Asan City to visit the construction site of Dyeon Korea.

The soil excavation was already completed, and the workers were building the factory. Director Yoon was talking with the construction company's president when he saw Gun-Ho coming into the construction site. He quickly ran to Gun-

Ho to greet him.

"The building started being constructed."

"Yes, it won't take long to complete the building. The finishing work will take some time though."

When Gun-Ho was walking around the construction site, GH Development's secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh—called Gun-Ho.

"Sir, this is Yeon-Soo Oh."

"Oh, hi. Go on."

"We just received a call from Ms. Angelina Rein from Dyeon. She said that they will send the vice president next week, who will work at Dyeon Korea."

"Oh, really?"

"The vice president's name is Mr. Adam Castler. She said you have met with him before."

Gun-Ho remembered Mr. Adam Castler. He met him during the dinner party in Seattle. He was introduced to Gun-Ho by the vice president of Dyeon—Mr. Brandon Burke. The man had thick eyebrows, and he was in his 30s. Gun-Ho was told that Mr. Adam Castler used to work for another Dyeon's joint venture in Mexico.

When Gun-Ho returned to his GH Mobile factory in Jiksan Town, the secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park—brought him today's economic newspaper with a cup of green tea.

"Will you check if the sales director is available now? If so, please ask him to come to my office now."

"Yes, sir."

Ten minutes after Ms. Hee-Jeong Park left Gun-Ho's office, Director Dong-Chan Kim entered the office. Director Dong-Chan Kim was recently promoted to a managing director position from being the sales director, and he was relocated to

the newly formed company—Dyeon Korea. He had been with GH Mobile for a long time since the days when it was still Mulpasaneop. He graduated from Chungang University majoring in English Literature, and he was in his mid-50s. He served his military service in Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA). Even though he majored in English literature in college and served KATUSA, he couldn't speak English very well. Maybe because he hadn't had a chance to practice it for a long time. He was very good at communicating with other people and he had thick skin, so he had the right aptitude for sales. He developed his career in the sales area in his entire life.

"You sent for me?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Please have a seat."

"I am thinking of visiting our current customers once Dyeon Korea produced the sample products."

"That's a good idea."

"I am also working on the pamphlet design right now, so we can carry them with the sample products."

"Hmm, I see. I have always admired your energy to work hard."

"Haha. I'm just doing my job, sir."

"And... the reason I asked you to come to my office is that we were just informed that Dyeon will send the vice president to Dyeon Korea next week."

"The vice president, sir?"

"You have already read the joint venture contract, haven't you?"

"Yes, I have, sir."

"If you read the contract carefully, it says that at the beginning of Dyeon Korea, I will be the president of Dyeon Korea, but Dyeon will send one of their workers

as a vice president. They can send more workers for various positions with Dyeon Korea, but considering the cost of labor, they are sending the vice president only for this time. A few engineers will be here too, and they will stay with us for several months. They will help us operate the equipment."

"I am aware of it, sir."

271 Recruit 1 – Part 2

"The vice president who Dyeon is sending to us is Mr. Adam Castler. He is in his late 30s, and he is single. He is in a one-step higher position than you, Director Yoon. I hope you could get along with him well."

"Don't worry about it, sir. I will get along with him. I guess maybe it's a good opportunity for me to practice my English."

"I know you will do fine with him since you know well how to attract people in sales. But since he is younger than you, I was concerned. Your president is younger than you, and the new vice president is younger than you. It might be an uncomfortable situation for you."

"Oh, no, not necessarily, sir. I actually prefer to have a young person as my boss. Many old people don't respect the workers who have a lower-ranked position than him, and they tend to talk bad about the person behind his back. I definitely like a young person better for my boss."

"Haha. That's good to know."

"So you have nothing to worry about, sir."

"Can you find a house where the new vice president—Mr. Adam Castler—could stay in? I am thinking of providing him a rental condo in Asan City with a monthly payment. He is coming from the U.S., and I don't want to ask him to stay in a OneRoomTel."

"How large are you thinking?"

"Hmm... Maybe 18 pyung or 25 pyung large. That should be enough since he will be staying by himself."

"Yes, sir. I will find one for him."

"Please find one that was built within ten years and redo the wallpaper."

"Yes, sir."

"We will have to provide him a vehicle as well. I am not sure if he will need a chauffeur."

"If we provide him a chauffeur, we will have to hire an additional worker, and that will cost us. For now, I can share my car with him, and then if he can drive, maybe we can rent a car for him."

"Hmm... Let's talk about it again once he arrives here."

"Yes, sir. I will look for a rental condo for him for now."

Gun-Ho received a call from Jae-Sik Moon from GH Media.

"President Goo, are you busy? Can we talk?"

"Sure. What's up?"

"I was informed that we will have a high school reunion."

"Why didn't they call me directly?"

"According to Suk-Ho Lee from Gyeongridan Street, he tried to reach you by calling your office number, but your secretary's office refused to transfer his call to you."

"We don't have a secretary's office here."

"It seems that our friends find it difficult to give you a call. I was actually hesitant too before I make a call to you today. I didn't want to disrupt your work since I know you are a busy man."

"You don't have to worry about it."

"So we are getting together this Saturday at Gangnam Station. They all said they want to see you at our meeting."

"Well, you can have fun without me; it's not like I have some special skills to amuse you, guys. Well, I will make time for Saturday."

"Thank you."

"How's the publishing company going?"

"Since President Shin made the contract for the cartoon series, we have been really busy. Since it is a cartoon, we need to be thorough in our editing work after they are fully translated into Korean."

"That's good, right? Being busy at work is good."

"The first two books will soon be printed. Once they come out, I believe President Shin will send them to you."

"Well, since it is a cartoon, I will read them. I'm not sure if that cartoon bookstore is still there in Juan Town, Incheon City. I used to rent lots of Japanese cartoon books before."

"I am still renting those cartoons and reading them."

"Haha, really? Well, keep up the good work. I gotta go now. Someone is asking for my presence."

"Okay. I will tell our high school friends that you will join us this Saturday."

While Gun-Ho was talking with Jae-Sik Moon on the phone, the general affairs director entered the office with the payroll documents to be signed.

Gun-Ho signed it with pleasure.

Gun-Ho received a call from the former vice president of S Group.

"Can we meet today? I think I want to get some fresh air and go to Jiksan Town."

"Today? Sure. I will be waiting for you here."

"Do you want me to come to your factory?"

"Sure. Come by 11:40 am. The workers will take lunch at noon, so if you want to see the production line working, you have to come before noon."

"Okay. I will see you then."

S Group was a part of the H Group, which was one of the largest companies in Korea like Samsung. There was a rumor saying that the owner of the S Group was related to H Group's owner. S Group had several factories worldwide including the U.S., China, India, and Europe. Egnopak was doing business with S Group and so was GH Mobile.

The former vice president of S Group, Mr. Jang-Hwan Song, graduated from Korea University majoring in Business and worked for S Group. He had worked as a branch manager within Korea and overseas as well. He had spent most of his time abroad, so he didn't have time to build his own network in Korea, and that worked adversely in a recent job appointment within S Group. So he quit his job, and he was taking a break at home.

Mr. Jang-Hwan Song arrived at GH Mobile at 11:40 sharp.

"Oh, Mr. Vice President, it's really good to see you again."

The former vice president extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake while smiling.

"I do like your building."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"It's soon lunchtime. Let's have a tour at the production site first."

"Sounds good."

When Gun-Ho and the S Group's former vice president entered the production site, the workers at the site seemed to work harder than usual. They tried to sit tight and work really hard. The forklift truck seemed to come and go more often than usual and made a louder noise.

"This area is for extruding, and that area is for molding. We do cutting in the building next door."

"Hmm... the arrangement for the moving line is a bit..."

"Pardon me?"

"No, never mind. It looks awesome. I feel like I am looking at the S Group's factory in Tianjin, China."

"Oh, that's right. You worked in Tianjin too, right?"

"Yes, when I was in a director position, I worked there, managing the factory."

"Was it a joint venture?"

"No, it was an independent company. Oh, speaking of which, how is the GH Mobile's company in China doing? I heard it is located in Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province."

"It's barely making a living."

"S Group has four factories in China. If you can make a contract with just one of them, that could be a lucrative business for GH Mobile."

"Please make some connection for us."

"Oh, haha. I no longer work for S Group. I have no such power. You will have to go and see the person in charge frequently and talk to him often."

Gun-Ho thought it was too much for Min-Hyeok to do the sales work and develop new customers by himself.

When Gun-Ho and the former vice president of S Group were walking in the factory yard, music resounded through the yard. That meant their lunchtime started. 250 workers in uniform started pouring into the yard; they were heading out to the company restaurant.

272 Recruit 2 – Part 1

Gun-Ho went to a restaurant that specialized in Soy Sauce Gejang* with the former vice president of S Group—Mr. Jang-Hwan Song for lunch that day. Mr. Song said he used to come to this restaurant pretty often when he enjoyed golfing before. The restaurant was located on the road that led to Jincheon County in Chungcheongbukdo Province. It was not very crowded and Gun-Ho liked it. The crab dish came with lots of various side dishes.

"Sir, since you don't work today, why don't you have some rice wine?"

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Maybe I should. Haha. But I blush whenever I drink liquor..."

Former Vice President Song drank a glass of rice wine anyway. He seemed to be feeling good that day.

During lunch, Gun-Ho and Mr. Song just exchanged superficial small talk. Since they were having marinated raw crabs, they talked about crabs in general. They talked about the crabs caught in Yeongpyeongdo Island and they also discussed the taste of the crabs in Imjin River. After they were done talking about crabs, they started talking about golf. Mr. Song seemed to enjoy golfing a lot. Since he stayed overseas for an extensive period of time in his entire career, he knew lots of popular golf courses abroad.

After lunch, Mr. Song tried to get a cup of coffee from a vending machine inside the restaurant when Gun-Ho suggested something else.

"Why don't we have a cup of coffee in a nice café instead of having it here?"

Gun-Ho took Mr. Song to Cheonho Reservoir in Cheonan City where they could have the view of Dankook University. There were many nice cafés in the area.

Gun-Ho and Mr. Song were sitting at a café while looking at the lake. Gun-Ho asked him,

"I know there are more than twenty large companies which supply their products to S Group, like Egnopak. Have you been offered any position by any of those companies?"

"Yes. I have actually received a job offer from two companies, but I decided to decline their offer. They are small companies compared to S Group, and I know they can't offer me a president position and they will give me a vice president position. I didn't want to work for a small company as a vice president. Moreover, if I join them, I am sure they will ask me to use my connection with S Group to demand them to buy more products. I didn't want to do that."

"But you can do that, right?"

"Not necessarily. S Group wouldn't increase their purchase unless the manufacturing company doesn't produce defective products and it can provide the products on time."

"That makes sense. They won't increase the volume of product purchase if they can't rely on the manufacturer."

"Right. You probably know well, President Goo. Manufacturing business is all about producing good products without any defect. A large company like S Group doesn't accept products from a company that is consistently producing defective products just because someone who has a connection with them is asking for it."

"Hmm."

"Your company, President Goo, GH Mobile is producing some defective products as well. You might not have received any report specifically about the defective products, but your company has probably recalled several products already. The department which is in charge of it should be aware of it."

"I believe you have been working mostly for a company that is registered with KOSDAQ. Have you ever worked for a company that was a private company but became a public company while you were working there?"

"Of course. After I helped one company go public, they let me go instead of promoting me."

"Who did that?"

"What do you think? Obviously, the company owner's family did that."

"They are so bad."

"The large company's owners, especially the founder's children or grandchildren have very different and unique mindset and approach in handling things in life."

"Could you elaborate?"

"I would say it is like elitism. They think they are the dominant group in the society, and most people are the workers for them or slaves. I had participated in a civil rights protest when I was in college before I entered into S Group, but I am not saying this because I am biased."

Mr. Song looked at the lake nostalgically while having a cup of coffee.

"It has been already 24 years since I began my career with S Group. I've had a good life while I was working there, so I don't have any resentment toward them now."

"Sir, why don't you join us to GH Mobile? Let's work together."

Mr. Song's eyes widened.

"I do appreciate your offer and thank you for highly recognizing my ability at work. I actually do like you, President Goo. I was told that you started your career as a factory worker. At first, I didn't believe that, but I realized later that it was true. It must have not been easy for you to come this far and I admire you for it. And I highly recognize your success at a young age. I was intrigued by your unique career path and it was interesting for me to see how you grow your company."

"Thank you."

"However, I don't think there is much I can do for GH Mobile."

"I just want you to be there. We were able to successfully develop our new product—AM083 Assembly because of you, sir."

"Don't say that. GH Mobile developed that product with its technology and system."

"Do you remember I told you before that I consider you like my older brother? Please join me at GH Mobile, I need your help, brother."

"Well, I don't know. If I join you, I want to be productive at least as much as I get paid."

"Join us and help us go public."

Mr. Song finished his coffee. He turned his head to Gun-Ho; he looked serious.

"If I successfully help GH Mobile go public, what would you give to me in return?"

Gun-Ho didn't expect the question, and he couldn't quickly respond to him.

Mr. Song continued,

"Even though I like you personally, President Goo, business is business. I don't want to make the same mistake. I don't want to be kicked out once I help a company go public."

Gun-Ho made a serious face and asked,

"What do you want in return, sir?"

It was getting dark and several college students started coming into the café.

Silence filled the air.

Mr. Song broke the silence and said,

"Once GH Mobile is successfully registered with KOSDAQ, the price of the shares will increase ten or twenty times the current price. You know that, right?"

"Yes, I know that."

"Well, since GH Mobile is not a pharmaceutical company or an IT company that often produces a new product, but it is a manufacturing company, the price of the

share won't increase that dramatically, but at least it will increase five times the current price."

"I am aware of it, too"

"Then you know what I want."

Gun-Ho laughed.

"So, you want company shares."

"Before I left home to meet with you today, I read GH Mobile's financial statements. There are lots of things to be done in order to fulfill the requirement of KOSDAQ registration. I can make GH Mobile be registered with KOSDAQ within three years. Give me the company shares. I want 3% of what you are currently holding, President Goo."

"3%..."

"I am not asking that I want to participate constantly in managing GH Mobile. I am getting old so I can't hold it for a long time anyway, and I will let my power in managing the company go when the time comes."

"Okay. I will give you 3% of the GH Mobile shares. Also, since you used to work as a vice president for a large company, I will give you a co-president position at GH Mobile."

Mr. Song extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake. Gun-Ho grabbed it. The female college students of Dankook University, who were sitting at a table across the hall, looked at Gun-Ho and Mr. Song and laughed. They were probably thinking that these two middle-aged men were acting weird in a café.

Note*

Gejang – Fresh raw crab dish, which is marinated in soy sauce

273 Recruit 2 – Part 2

Min-Hyeok Kim's wedding was around the corner.

The wedding will be held in China first, and Gun-Ho knew Min-Hyeok didn't have many friends in China who could attend his wedding.

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Jae-Sik Moon who worked as a chief editor at GH Media.

"Jae-Sik? It's me, Gun-Ho."

"Oh, President Goo."

"You heard that Min-Hyeok is getting married soon, right?"

"Yes. His wedding will be held on the 16th of this month in Shanghai, right?"

"I will attend his wedding in Shanghai, and you will have to come with me to China."

"Me?"

"Yes. We don't want to make Min-Hyeok feel lonely at his wedding without friends. You and me must go there and celebrate with him. I will pay for the trip."

"Okay then. I've never been to China before."

"He will have another wedding in Korea after the one in China, so we don't have to make too much money as a gift this time."

"Haha. He is a lucky man with two weddings."

"Well, speaking of which, Min-Hyeok is getting married soon, and you already did that once, and I am the only one who has never been married."

"I was married but I didn't have a wedding ceremony."

"Why not?"

"We couldn't afford to have one at that time. We just lived together without a wedding ceremony. We registered our marriage though."

"Oh, are you seeing your ex-wife again?"

"Since my life became stable as I am working for GH Media, I started seeing my ex-wife from time to time."

"Why don't you live together then?"

"I guess we still need some time alone before that."

"It shouldn't be that complicated. Just live together. What's the problem?"

"We have our own reasons. Let's talk about something else."

"Okay. We will have a high school reunion tomorrow, and we can leave for China the day after tomorrow then."

"You are coming to the high school reunion, right? Everyone is asking me if you are coming. They seem to be interested in you."

"I think I will go unless something unexpected happens."

Director Dong-Chan Kim came to Gun-Ho's office to let him know how the accommodation arrangement went for Mr. Adam Castler who would soon come to join Dyeon Korea as a vice president.

"There are tons of good condos for rent. I looked at Purgio Condo. They are asking 500,000 won per month with a security deposit of 10,000,000 won. That's for a 25 large pyung condo."

"If you like that one, let's take it."

"But we will have to hang new wallpaper for that condo, and we need to buy a refrigerator and washer and other home appliances. It will cost additional money. So, I was thinking what if we lease a two-room villa for him?"

"A villa?"

"I saw a good villa in the rental market. It's close to our company. It is a newly constructed building and it is clean. The villa comes with full option including a refrigerator, washer, and other essential home appliances. So, we won't have to spend additional money other than the rent. Additionally, it is within walking distance from our company."

"It's not in a city. Do you think he would be okay with it?"

"I've been with Americans before when I served KATUSA so I know them. Americans usually prefer to live in a single house rather than a high-rise condo."

"How much do they ask?"

"They are asking 450,000 won per month with 5,000,000 won security deposit. We need to pay tax for it though."

"Let's have Mr. Adam Castler stay in a hotel for one or two days when he arrives here, and then show him the condo and the villa. And give him all the information we have, such as the rental price and the options that each property provides. We will let him choose."

"Sounds good, sir."

"Since you served KATUSA and majored English literature in college, I think you will get along with Mr. Adam Castler just fine."

"I served KATUSA 25 years ago. I forgot a lot of things, especially in English. If I worked for a company that required me to speak English like a trading company, I would have probably been able to speak English fine."

"Do the American soldiers really like a single house better?"

"Yes, they do. I served my military service in Dongducheon City with American soldiers. At least those people there prefer a single house. Americans are the descendants of the pioneers who settled in the West, so it makes sense."

Gun-Ho headed to Gangnam Station to join the high school reunion. He arrived after seven o'clock in the evening. He arrived a bit late because he left his car at the parking lot in TowerPalace; he purposefully left his car at home because he thought he would drink some liquor that evening.

The high school friends assumed that Gun-Ho wouldn't come to the reunion when he didn't show up until 7 pm. They already started drinking.

"Oh, Gun-Ho is here."

"Hey, Gun-Ho."

"You should probably be very busy. Come and have a seat here."

Won-Chul Jo stood up from his seat and asked Gun-Ho to sit next to him.

It was not just Won-Chul Jo who stood up to greet Gun-Ho, but almost everyone stood up when they saw Gun-Ho coming into the room to join them. No one seemed to be jealous of Gun-Ho who was making lots of money. Instead, they all seemed to be part of Gun-Ho's business or inner circle to receive some benefits from Gun-Ho's success.

"So are we all here?"

"We don't get together regularly, but we thought we'd better get together today since we haven't seen each other for a long time. Moreover, Min-Hyeok is getting married soon, so we wanted to talk about it too."

"We don't have to go to Shanghai in China to attend Min-Hyeok's wedding this time. He will have another wedding soon in Korea. We all can attend that wedding."

"Right. We were talking about collecting money gifts for Min-Hyeok's wedding in China since Jae-Sik will attend his wedding in China."

"You don't have to because you can give it to him when he has his wedding in Korea. If you are so close with Min-Hyeok and wants to give him a gift money twice, then it's up to you."

"Maybe we should."

"Oh, let me fill up your glass with liquor. You didn't bring your car today, right?"

"Yeah. I left it at home. I knew I wanted to drink today since I would be with friends."

"Hey, order one more bottle of liquor since Gun-Ho is here. We will need more liquor."

The room became noisy again.

"What is Won-Chul Jo is doing now?"

"Me? I am the assistant manager in the general affairs department."

"What about Byeong-Chul Hwang? Is he still a staff researcher?"

"No, I am a senior researcher now. You said, your company has a research center, right?"

"Yeah, we have one. You used to be ranked number one in class when we were in high school. I think you should be the lead researcher by next year. You deserve it."

"Your company's chief officer of the research center, which university did he graduate from?"

"Our chief officer has a Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany. Oh, maybe you know him. He used to work in a research center located in Pangyo City."

"How old is he?"

"He is in his early 50s."

"Maybe I know him. Does he have the last name—Oh?"

"That's right. His name is Joon-Soo Oh."

Byeong-Chul Hwang just nodded his head without saying a word.

Min-Ho Kang who was sitting across the table chipped in. He was working for a civic group.

"What position does your chief officer of the research center have? What's the name of the research center?"

"We don't have a name for our research center. Our chief officer has a director position."

"Well, all those people are working for you, Gun-Ho, right? You are on the highest position."

Gun-Ho just smiled.

"Wow. You, Gun-Ho, you are really something. We are so proud of you. Let me fill up your glass with liquor."

Min-Ho Kang didn't try to be sarcastic anymore with Gun-Ho as he always had been with everyone.

Many high school friends didn't come to the gathering that evening, compared to the last time. Some of them were too busy in mind with the burden of life.

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Gun-Ho said while drinking the liquor that Min-Ho Kang handed to him,

"I came late today, so I will buy a drink for all. Enjoy it."

"Gun-Ho Goo, you should come late on our meeting every time from now on, okay? So you can buy us a drink all the time."

As Min-Ho said it, everyone laughed.

274 Recruit 3 – Part 1

Gun-Ho and Jae-Sik Moon left for Shanghai, China in order to attend Min-Hyeok's wedding.

Gun-Ho who was still worried about not having many friends at Min-Hyeok's wedding made a phone call to Professor Jien Wang and Director Seukang Li. The wedding was held at a restaurant called JangGang in Shanghai. Gun-Ho at first thought, when he heard the name of the restaurant, that it was a restaurant serving some Chinese noodles; however, it turned out that the restaurant was located in Changjiang Hotel and the wedding would be held at the hotel.

The wedding ceremony overall was similar to the one in Korea, except that they used red color extensively in decorating the wedding hall. Jae-Sik was carrying his camera with him all the time during his stay in Shanghai, and he brought it with him to the wedding as well, and he was busy taking pictures with it.

"Hey, you seem to be so busy there in taking pictures, huh?"

"Yeah, I just want to keep all these in record."

"Enjoy the view and the moment. You might miss things by keeping yourself busy in taking pictures."

"Don't ask me later to show you these pictures to remember the moment here."

The wedding was performed in a Western-style. Just like a wedding in Korea, the tables were covered with tablecloths; liquor and beverage were placed on them, along with a lucky bag with some chocolate in it.

Gun-Ho and Jae-Sik sat at a table where its table nameplate said Xin Lang Pengyou. Jae-Sik took a picture of that table nameplate as well because it looked exotic with Chinese characters on it.

"It seems that Chinese people call a friend Pengyou."

After a while, Jien Wang and Seukang Li arrived. When they saw Gun-Ho, they seemed to be very happy.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Thank you for coming, friend."

"Why are you saying that? Of course, we should come to congratulate Min-Hyeok."

"Oh, Jae-Sik, these are my Chinese friends."

"This is Jien Wang; he is a college professor in the business department at Zhejiang University. And this is Seukang Li; he is a director of a bureau in Shanghai City."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

The three men exchanged their business cards to each other. Jae-Sik Moon stared at Jien Wang's and Seukang Li's business cards for a while.

"Are you going to take a picture of those business cards too?"

Jae-Sik scratched his head in embarrassment.

After looking at Jae-Sik's business card, Seu-Kang Li asked Gun-Ho,

"What's his position?"

"He is a chief editor in a publishing company."

"Oh, I see."

Jae-Sik felt envious of Gun-Ho who was speaking Chinese fluently while talking with Jien Wang and Seukang Li.

"I knew Gun-Ho made a fortune and became a rich man, but I didn't know he could speak Chinese fluently."

Jae-Sik Moon was amazed by Gun-Ho's ability in communicating freely with Chinese people in their native tongue, which he newly found.

Right before the wedding started, the president and the vice president of Jinxi

Construction Company arrived. They came all the way to the wedding venue to congratulate Min-Hyeok.

"Hey, Chinkkeo Seon! You, Kkangsin Kkao came too!"

"Gun-Ho Goo, good to see you again."

"Thank you so much for coming."

"Of course we should come. We are Pengyou (friend), right?"

Once the wedding ceremony began, all sorts of dishes started coming out as well. The duration of the ceremony was a lot longer than the Korean one. The guests started drinking the strong Chinese alcohol—Baijiu with oily Chinese food. A lot of them smoked too, and it made the room filled with smoke.

It was time for picture-taking with friends. Five people attended the wedding as Min-Hyeok's friends, and that was enough number of friends to make Min-Hyeok feel supported and cared.

Jien Wang whispered into Gun-Ho's ear in a low voice,

"The bride looks exotic."

"She is Korean-Chinese. And she studied in the U.S. Now she is teaching at the international school in Shanghai."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho looked at the bride. She was tall and she was a beauty.

Once Gun-Ho returned to Korea after attending Min-Hyeok's wedding in China, he called for a meeting.

"Since we acquired Mulpasaneop, our sales revenue has steadily increased because of your hard work. The capital of this company is 3 billion won, but I spent an additional 5 billion won in order to pay off urgent debts and to build a new factory."

The directors and managers made notes while Gun-Ho was talking.

"We don't have urgent debts anymore and we don't have a creditor who is pressing us hard to repay them. We don't have unpaid wages any longer. So, our company is doing okay now. However, we have to keep in mind that we still have debt which is about the same amount as our sales revenue. Since we have to make a payment to the bank for the loan interest, we can't raise your or other employees' salaries yet. Our internal auditor here should know better since he is the one who has been handling all financial matters."

The internal auditor was listening to Gun-Ho, and the other executives kept taking notes. Gun-Ho was in his mid-30s and he used to work as a factory worker while the managers and directors in the meeting had a high academic degree and work experience, and most of them were in their 50s. Gun-Ho continued to talk,

"Mr. Internal Auditor, how much debt do we currently have in total?"

"As of today, we have about 70 billion won debt including accounts payable, short-term and long-term debt."

"Let me then ask you, Director Dong-Chan Kim, who is in charge of sales. Is it possible that we can pay all these debt off by selling our products?"

"It will be really difficult to do so for now."

"Listen up. I am planning to go public in the near future. We keep increasing our sales revenue and reducing our debt, and then we register our company with KOSDAQ. There are certain things required in order to be registered with KOSDAQ. And a certain percentage of the company's shares must be owned by a certain number of people. So, once we go public, our employees will have an opportunity to own the company's shares. Once they own a piece of our company, it will grow their sense of ownership toward the company and hopefully, that would lead to high productivity."

The executives kept writing quickly on their notes as Gun-Ho continued to talk.

"My goal is growing this company as a KOSDAQ registered firm."

The internal auditor chipped in.

"That sounds great, sir. I do believe this company needs to go public. We can

bring in more funds and it will improve our employees' work environment. Once we become a public company, we don't have to borrow money from a bank, but we can issue stocks instead to raise funds."

Gun-Ho continued,

"So I want to strengthen our sales, and also bring in a person who has extensive work experience in the field."

Once Gun-Ho announced that he wanted to bring a new person in, the manager and directors stopped taking notes at once and looked at Gun-Ho.

"Starting the first day of the next month, we will be working with Mr. Jang-Hwan Song who used to work for S Group as a vice president. Since he has extensive work experience with a large company, I am thinking of giving him a position of a co-president."

The executives looked at each other in surprise.

275 Recruit 3 – Part 2

"The reason I want to bring him into our company as a co-president is that I will be really busy once Dyeon Korea starts its business, and I won't be able to manage every business activity of GH Mobile. I will, of course, be involved with important decision making such as on a new investment, for example, but for daily work management, our new president—President Song will help you."

Director Dong-Chan Kim commented on the news that Gun-Ho just broke. Maybe he felt more comfortable and liberal to talk about GH Mobile's new co-president because he would soon start working for Dyeon Korea.

"S Group has several branch offices, and President Song is highly respected in the field. I don't know much about registering a company with KOSDAQ, but I can tell that President Song will be extremely helpful in increasing our sales revenue."

Gun-Ho wanted to hear from the new chief officer of the research center and Director Yoon who was in charge of construction. They both usually didn't make any comment on things that were not directly related to their departments.

"What do you think? Director Oh and Director Yoon? Anything you would like to add?"

"We will follow your decision, sir."

"Director Choi from the general affairs department, would you like to make any comment on it?"

The director of the general affairs department didn't know much about the fields other than his own department, just like the research center's chief officer and the construction director, so he responded,

"I have nothing to add, sir."

Once the meeting was over, Gun-Ho asked the general affairs director to stay.

"This is President Jang-Hwan Song's phone number. You probably need to talk

with him to prepare the necessary paperwork before he starts working with us."

"Yes, sir. I will need his job acceptance letter and his certificate of a registered seal. I will talk to him."

"Oh, and get a job application papers from him too."

"Yes, sir. I will ask him to send us his resume and resident registration."

"Sounds good. You are dismissed."

The general affairs director didn't leave the office right away; he seemed to have something to ask Gun-Ho.

"Umm... Sir, how much salary are we offering to him?"

"Oh, his wage? Hmm... Let's give him 90% of what I currently receive."

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, one more thing. Do we need to make a modification on the business registration?"

"Since we are having a co-president, yes, we will have to file for the change. Also, you will need to let our vendors and customer companies know about it too. I will have to put them on notice about the major changes in our company."

"A lot of work to do."

"For our major customer companies, we need to send an official letter to them in informing that we now have a new co-president. For other customer and vendor companies, we can just send our new business registration reflecting the change. And don't forget to register the new co-president's certificate of the registered seal. I guess you are about to be very busy."

"Sir, I am on it."

The director of the general affairs department left Gun-Ho's office after giving him a bow.

The secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park brought Gun-Ho newspapers and mails.

Many of them were spam mails. Gun-Ho had no idea how all these people learned his name, but he received tons of mails from all sorts of organizations such as business owner's golf clubs, overseas travel clubs, health improvement for business owners' clubs, and etc.

Gun-Ho didn't even bother to open those mails, but he just threw them out into a trashcan.

Gun-Ho opened the newspaper. He loved his newspaper reading time during his working day when he read a newspaper while having a cup of coffee. Gun-Ho could read news through the Internet, but he preferred to read paper news. That way, he didn't feel very tired with his eyes.

When he was enjoying his time reading a newspaper, Secretary Hee-Jeong Park entered the office.

"We have someone here, sir. He'd like to talk with you."

"Who is he?"

"He said, he is from Egnopak."

"Egnopak? Hmmm. Their president came and talked with me not long ago."

"This man is younger."

"Probably, Egnopak's president sent someone. Let him in."

Surprisingly, it was Egnopak's president's son—Dong-Hwan Kim. He didn't come alone, but he was with three men who looked like a bouncer.

"Hello."

"President Dong-Hwan Kim? You came to see me with bouncers or are they your bodyguards? You are not supposed to visit another person's company with bouncers."

"I came to apologize."

"Apologize?"

At that moment, the general affairs director came into Gun-Ho's office with several other male employees. Gun-Ho was wondering what the general affairs director was doing there, so he asked,

"What are you doing, Director Kim?"

"Oh, umm... I was told that several strangers went into your office, sir."

"Hahaha. Nothing to worry about, Director Kim. This is Egnopak's president's son."

The director of the general affairs left Gun-Ho's office with the male employees he brought with.

Dong-Hwan Kim lowered his head in front of Gun-Ho and said,

"I am so sorry, sir. I have just been released from jail. My father told me to come and see you and apologize for my earlier behavior."

"Let bygones be bygones. We can get along fine from now on."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to Mr. Dong-Hwan Kim for a handshake.

"We apologize to you too, sir."

The three bouncers stood up from their seats and knelt on the floor.

"What are you guys doing? Please get up! This is a business entity. I don't want anyone to misunderstand what's going on here. Get up!"

"We didn't know you are the big brother of our Tae-Young bro."

"Tae-Young?"

Gun-Ho couldn't quickly recall who Tae-Young was at first, and then he realized they were talking about Mr. Tae-Young Im.

"Oh, Tae-Young Im!"

Gun-Ho smiled.

"I am so busy today, so let's just have a cup of tea before you leave."

Gun-Ho asked his secretary, Ms. Hee-Jeong Park to bring some green tea.

While having a cup of green tea, Gun-Ho said,

"We shouldn't use violence. It doesn't just prevent you from harming others, but you can get hurt too."

"We will keep that in mind, sir."

"Also, Mr. Dong-Hwan Kim. You will inherit your father's company, and it is wise for you to act with discretion and caution."

"I will keep it in mind."

One bouncer chipped in.

"I don't see the person who was with you, sir. The man who attacked us with a screwdriver."

"Oh, Jong-Suk Park?"

"He has really fast kicks. I've been in this field for a long time, but I've never seen a person with that kind of kicks before."

Dong-Hwan Kim added,

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I thought he was the leader of a gangster."

Gun-Ho laughed, and he asked the bouncers,

"Were there anyone who got injured?"

"Of course there were. Our people got injured too. One of us lost several teeth after having hit by that person with a screwdriver."

"Oh, really?"

As a matter of fact, I believe more people were injured in our party than yours, sir."

"Anyhow, using violence only produces more harm to both parties. I accept your apology. You can leave now. I have work to do. My employees are probably waiting for me with reports to be reviewed and signed by now."

Gun-Ho had a handshake with the bouncers and tapped their shoulders.

Dong-Hwan Kim and the bouncers gave Gun-Ho a 90-degree bow before they left Gun-Ho's office.

276 Vice President Adam Castler 1 – Part 1

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok. He wanted to thank Gun-Ho again for coming to China to congratulate him on his wedding.

"Thank you, friend, for coming to my wedding. The money you gifted me is a lot. Thank you so much."

"Don't mention it. It was not much at all."

"I didn't expect to see Jae-Sik coming to my wedding. I do really appreciate it. Also, I was surprised when I saw Seukang Li and Jien Wang."

"I knew you didn't have many friends in China, so I called them all to come and join me in congratulating on your wedding."

"I actually expected to not see any friends at my wedding in China. But because of you, I suddenly had six friends at my wedding. I was so happy."

"Haha."

"And you know what? When my father-in-law saw Seukang Li coming to my wedding, he was impressed by my social connections."

"How come? Does he know Seukang Li?"

"My father-in-law is an artist. I told you about it before, right? He is not a very well-known painter, but he made enough money by selling his artwork to support his daughters who are studying in the U.S."

"Really?"

"Seukang Li is the director of the bureau of cultural affairs, radio broadcasting, film, television, and arts. I think they know each other; you know, the artists and the director of that bureau. When I told my father-in-law that Seukang Li is one of my friends, he seemed to be surprised."

"Haha. Really? I guess I'll get one of your father-in-law's paintings someday."

"He sometimes has his own art exhibition. You can come then. To be honest with you, I've never been to his art exhibition before."

"Did you buy a home to start a family?"

"Yes, I did."

"I think you told me that before. You said you were going to buy a condo that was about 150 million Korean won."

"Yes, it's a condo located close to our factory in Suzhou City. It is one of the luxurious condos in the area. My wife, Dingding loves it. Fang Di Chan (Real estate) agency also told me that I could expect its price to go up."

"How large is it?"

"It's 84. It's about 25 pyung in Korea. The name of the condo complex is Chiwonhwawon. If you say you are living in Chiwonhwawon, people will automatically think you are wealthy. It has three bedrooms, enough room to have guests sometimes. My parents-in-law spent the night with us yesterday."

"Did your wife find a job there?"

"Yes, she did. The international school here offered her a job right away."

"That's really good. Your wife is really pretty."

"Not really. She looks really pretty when you see her from 20 meters away. I call her the '20 meter beauty.' If you get a closer look at her, you would know what I'm talking about."

"Haha. What are you talking about? Your wife is pretty regardless of how far you are looking at her from."

"Haha. Thank you for saying that."

"How much did you borrow money from the bank when you bought your home?"

"It's 100 million won."

"The monthly payment for the interest should be high."

"Since we are both working, I guess we can handle it."

"Let's do this. If you spend too much on paying for the loan interest, that will slow you down in moving forward with your life. I will lend you 100 million won without interest, and once you get your stock option at the end of the year, you can pay me back."

"No no, Gun-Ho. I don't want to impose."

"Just do it. I am insisting."

"How about we do this?"

"What are you suggesting?"

"I've been thinking a lot if I can ask you for a favor..."

"Just spit it out, man."

"I have actually been agonizing over this..."

"What?"

"I will have another wedding in Korea next month. It will be held in Incheon City."

"Of course. That's where your parents are."

"And my bride wanted to visit my home there. My home in Juan Town in Incheon City is an old and small townhouse with only two bedrooms. The entrance to the townhouse complex is not very clean, and the building is more than 20 years old. It would be really embarrassing if my wife sees it."

"Hmm."

"When my father was still working as a bus driver, he had two big car accidents. At that time we had to spend a substantial amount of money from our savings to

handle the situation, so our family couldn't save enough money to find a better home. My parents are living there with a security deposit of 85 million won. If you could lend me 100 million won, I think I can help my parents buy a new home. For my home in China, I've already borrowed money from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. I think I can handle the payment here."

"So, you are saying that your parents can buy a home with their security deposit of 85 million won and the 100 million won I would lend you."

"Right. As you know well, there is a nice condo complex close to Juan Station. It's the Hyundai HomeTown Condo. It's my mom's dream to live there."

"Isn't it expensive?"

"I can get a 30 pyung large condo there for 250 million won if I find an urgent sale property."

"Then you are still short of 65 million won."

"So, I think I can borrow that amount from a bank in Incheon. My father and my younger brother can make the payment for that loan. My father is making 1 million per month by driving a school bus, and my younger brother just got a job."

"Where is your brother working?"

"The company's name is Ilsin Electricity. They are doing subcontracting work at the Korea Electric Power Corporation. He has a level-1 license as an electrician."

"Okay. I will lend you 100 million won."

"Thank you and I'm sorry, Gun-Ho. I've been asking you so many favors. If you send the money and I get it from here in China, it's going to be complicated for me to bring it to Korea, right? I have to make a report to the government too."

"Don't worry about it. I will prepare it in Korea. I will send 100 million won to your bank account in Korea. But remember that you should pay me back at the end of this year."

"Thank you. I really really appreciate it. I don't think I will ever be able to forget

how you have helped me with my life. I will then tell my mom to put the townhome on the market. You are saving my whole family, Gun-Ho. Thank you so much."

"Don't say that. It's not free, you know? I'm just lending you money for a short period of time. The president of GH Parts Company shouldn't spend his precious time agonizing over a house matter."

Lymondell Dyeon sent a fax from Seattle to GH Mobile. It said that Mr. Adam Castler who would join Dyeon Korea as a vice president would arrive within two days. When Gun-Ho was reading the fax, he received a call from the GH Development's secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh from Seoul.

"Sir, I just received a call from Ms. Angelina Rein from Dyeon."

"Was it about Mr. Adam Caster coming here soon?"

"You knew about this already, sir?"

"You will have to go to the airport to greet him, Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh, the day after tomorrow."

"By myself, sir? I don't even have a car to pick him up."

"Let me see... Who should I send there with you? Oh, go with Director Kang. Let me talk to him now."

After a while, Director Kang picked up the phone.

"It's me, sir."

"The vice president of Dyeon Korea is arriving here the day after tomorrow. He is an American."

"Oh, really?"

"I want you to go to Incheon International Airport to greet him. Will you be available the day after tomorrow?"

"Yes, sir. We have the new accounting manager and Ms. Ji-Young Jeong here."

They can take care of things around here during my absence."

"You will need someone who can speak English fluently. Bring Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh with you. Once you pick up the vice president from the airport, bring him here to our factory in Jiksan Town."

"Yes, sir."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"I am asking you this because your Grandeur looks good."

"Haha. It's a used car, sir."

277 Vice President Adam Castler 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho called for Director Dong-Chan Kim.

"Mr. Adam Castler is coming the day after tomorrow."

"Oh, really?"

"Is the villa with two rooms that you told me about earlier still available?"

"Yes, it is still available."

"We will have him stay in a hotel for the first few days. Do you know any good hotels around here? Onyang Hot Spring Hotel is a bit far from here."

"There is a hotel called Central Hotel. It's in Seongjeong town. It's not bad."

"Okay. Let him stay there and tell him that since this is a small town, there are no large hotel chains."

"Yes, sir."

"Once Dyeon Korea's factory starts working, we will need to hire workers by placing an official job posting. Until then, why don't you find one or two people for now who can take care of trivial work? I'm not comfortable asking you to do the work like reserving a hotel room, Director Kim."

"I'm totally okay with it, sir. If we hire a person now for no specific job to assign, we could just waste our money."

"Once Mr. Adam Castler arrives, discuss with him the company's organizational structure and hiring workers and things like that."

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

"The three workers who went to the U.S. for training are coming back next

week, including Jong-Suk Park. Also, we will have three engineers from Dyeon soon once we receive their equipment, and they will stay here for three months. We will need to find a place for them to stay too."

"In that case, I strongly suggest the villa I told you about. The building has various sizes of units. Some have one room and some have two rooms. Mr. Castler can take the villa unit with two rooms and three engineers can stay in the unit with one room."

Gun-Ho wire-transferred 100 million won from his personal bank account to Min-Hyeok's account. Right after lunchtime that day, Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok.

"I received the 100 million won you sent. Thank you very much. I know it's a significant amount of money and thank you for lending it to me. I told my mom that I borrowed it from the company and asked her to place the townhome on the market. Well, thank you again."

"The townhome will easily be sold, right?"

"I was worried about that too, but I was told that it is moving season, so they will be able to find someone quickly who would want to take it."

"You will have to find a condo for sale in the Hyundai HomeTown too, right?"

"I already talked with a real estate agent, and he said there are a few available on the market. So I asked my mom to check it out."

"That's nice."

"And I attended a meeting for Korean businessmen here this morning. There was a person who was involved in Dandong Economic Development Zone in the border region between North Korea and China. He suggested that we should export our products to North Korea."

"Dandong? Isn't that the area around Amrok River?"

"That's right. It's facing Sinuiju City in North Korea across the international border of Amrok River."

"Who was the person?"

"He is an executive officer of China Merchants Holdings International. He invited us to visit them in Dandong City."

"Dandong..."

"So, I told him that I will need to talk with our board of directors first."

"Hmm, I see."

"How is GH Mobile?"

"Oh, a new co-president will join us soon at GH Mobile."

"Really? Who is it?"

"It's Mr. Jang-Hwan Song who used to work for S Group as a vice president."

"S Group has tons of branch offices everywhere. There is one in Tianjin and another one is here in Suzhou City. I don't know the exact locations, but there are several more in China."

"How is their factory in Suzhou City? Is it big?"

"It is big. I believe they have more than 1,000 workers. I hope we can get a business with one of S Group's branch offices here once the new co-president joins us. He can visit our factory here in China."

"I will talk to him about it when he starts working with us."

"I can't wait to work with him. All of our equipment and machines are fully working right now. Thanks to the former GH Mobile's plant manager who is working with us now here in GH Parts Company. He helped us fix all the equipment. We are ready to work more. I hope we can get some work from S Group."

"How is he doing? Is he doing okay there in China?"

"He is doing great. He loves Chinese food here, and he often goes to Karaoke to enjoy his spare time."

"Haha. Isn't he a bit old to spend time in Karaoke?"

"That means he is still young, doesn't it? I am thinking of hiring him as a part-time employee once his one-year work as an advisory position expires."

"Well, that's your call."

"He is getting along very well with Chinese workers here."

"That's good to know. I think you need to consider hiring a Korean worker who can stay in the office while you are out for sales."

"Well, then we will have to pay that person..."

"That way, you can focus on sales and generating more revenue."

"Actually, there is one person who would fit right in."

"Then hire that person."

"He worked for a Korean company here, which closed its business and moved back to Korea. He worked as an assistant manager there. He is three years younger than us, but he has an extensive work experience at a factory. Moreover, he speaks Chinese fluently. Well, I will take care of it."

"Sounds good."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

Mr. Adam Castler arrived at Incheon International Airport. Director Kang and Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh were there to greet him.

"Oh, Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh, it's very nice meeting you finally in person."

"Sir, this is our Director."

"Oh, hi Mr. Director."

"How do you do!"

"What?"

"How do you do?"

When Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh repeated what Director Kang said in English with better pronunciation, Mr. Adam Castler grabbed Director Kang's hand and shook it.

Director Kang was wondering:

'I said 'how do you do' exactly the same way as Ms. Yeong-Soo Oh did. How come he doesn't understand what I said while perfectly understanding what Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh said? What's wrong? This is going to be very stressful.'

Director Kang drove the car heading to Jiksan Town while Mr. Adam Castler and Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh were having a good time in conversing with each other. Director Kang couldn't understand their conversation because they seemed to talk too fast. Director Kang didn't like the feeling of being excluded from the conversation and being just a chauffeur.

It was the second time when Gun-Ho and Mr. Adam Castler met each other since the dinner party in Seattle.

"Oh, Mr. Goo!"

"Adam Castler!"

The two men hugged each other.

"Thank you for coming to join us all the way from the U.S."

Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh was interpreting simultaneously while they were talking to each other in their own native tongue.

Gun-Ho called for the executives and introduced them to Mr. Adam Castler; especially, Gun-Ho introduced Director Dong-Chan Kim as he would be the one who would be working closely with him at Dyeon Korea. Since Director Kim used to speak English during his military service with KATUSA, he could somewhat communicate with Mr. Adam Castler, and Mr. Castler was a very patient man.

"Why don't you take a good rest in the hotel today and start working tomorrow. You can come to this place tomorrow. Director Dong-Chan Kim will give you a ride to your hotel."

Mr. Adam Castler wanted to take a quick tour of the factory before he went to the hotel.

"Director Kim, why don't you give him a tour?"

Director Kim showed Mr. Adam Castler around the factory, and Ms. Yeon-Soo followed them to interpret.

When they entered the production field where a loud machine noise filled the air, the workers glanced at Director Kim and Mr. Adam Castler. They were wondering who the foreigner was.

"Is he a new buyer?"

The workers whispered to each other.

It was Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh's first time to visit a production field at a factory. Heavy machines were laid out in an organized way, and the workers in the same uniform were moving quickly while manufacturing the products. It was interesting. While interpreting for Director Kang and for Mr. Adam Castler, Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh sometimes had a hard time coming up with the right word for a technical term about machines and factory matters.

278 Vice President Adam Castler 2 – Part 1

After spending the first night in Korea, Mr. Adam Castler came to work the following morning.

"Good morning."

Gun-Ho could say only the morning greeting to Mr. Adam Castler without an interpreter. Gun-Ho regretted to let Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh go back to Seoul to GH Development. Gun-Ho needed an interpreter, and Mr. Lee crossed his mind, who once interpreted for Gun-Ho when Dyeon sent their investigators to visit Gun-Ho's factory. Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs director.

"Do you remember Mr. Lee who did the interpretation work for us when Dyeon's examiners were here?"

"Yes, sir. I remember him. He was a retiree from a big company, and he used to work as a branch manager overseas."

"Do you have his contact number?"

"Yes, I have it."

"Call him and ask him to come to our company as soon as he could if he doesn't have any prior engagement. He can take KTX; it's the fastest way to get here."

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Lee arrived at the factory in Jiksan Town before noon that day. He drove his Sonata instead of taking KTX.

"We need an interpreter for the next few days starting today."

"Did you say a few days? Then, I guess I can stay in a motel just like I did last time."

"That sounds good."

Mr. Adam Castler was sitting at a desk in a small meeting room. It was his office for now, which was temporarily set for him. He looked happy when he saw an interpreter joining him.

In the afternoon, Gun-Ho took Mr. Adam Castler to the construction site in Asan City where the new factory for the joint venture was being built. Mr. Lee accompanied them, of course, to interpret for them. The factory was half-finished.

"Mr. Adam Castler, this is Director Yoon. He is in charge of the construction."

Director Yoon could speak English; it might be because he used to work often abroad in overseeing construction. But he relied on the interpreter when he had to talk about important matters. Mr. Adam Castler seemed to have lots of things to point out.

"Once we receive a compressor, the electric switchboard needs to be placed here since the cooler box is long. We can't place the compressor here. Place the compressor at the back and cover it to reduce the noise."

Mr. Adam Castler thoroughly examined the construction site while pointing out things that needed to be corrected.

While walking around the construction site with Mr. Adam Castler, Director Dong-Chan Kim decided to hire a worker who could speak English. Not just because of Mr. Adam Castler, but Dyeon would send three more workers who were Americans. He didn't think that having an interpreter would be enough to work with them on a daily basis. He thought it would be better to have someone who could stay next to him all the time at work.

Director Dong-Chan Kim came to Gun-Ho and said,

"I've placed a job posting on WorkNet after you suggested hiring a worker now."

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Good, but I'm not sure if we could find a good worker here in Asan City. Most

competent workers prefer to work in Seoul."

"We will close the job application submission the day after tomorrow. We will see then."

Despite Gun-Ho's concern, there were so many competent workers who were looking for a job. The position that Director Kim posted required only one-year work experience overseas, but thirty people applied for the job even though the job posting clearly stated the location of the work would be Asan City.

"Who's going to interview them?"

"I was thinking that I would do the first interview, and you do the final interview, sir."

"The new worker will be working with you, Director Kim, not me. So I don't think I need to interview the candidates. You decide who to hire. You know what? Why don't you bring Mr. Adam Castler to the interview? So you can test the candidates' English ability as well."

"Sounds good, sir."

When Gun-Ho came to work in the morning, Mr. Adam Castler entered Gun-Ho's office with the interpreter—Mr. Lee.

"Mr. Adam Castler wants to ask you something, sir."

"Okay, I'm listening."

Mr. Adam Castler started talking in English with colorful body gestures.

"What is he saying?"

"He wants to move his desk to the construction site in Asan City."

"We don't even have an enclosed office space there yet."

"He said he would be fine working in a container office."

"Hmm, sure, if that's what he wants."

After Mr. Adam Castler left Gun-Ho's office, Director Kim came into the office.

"Sir, I want to move to the container office in Asan City."

"Won't you be uncomfortable there? It's really small. You will feel cramped."

"It's okay. The building will be completed within a month. It shouldn't be a problem working in a container office for only a month. I will feel more comfortable working in a container office in Asan City rather than staying here since I now work for Dyeon Korea. Allow me to move there, sir."

"Okay, if you insist. But I am not sure if we have enough container office."

"We don't have to buy an additional container office. We can just rent one."

"Okay. Do what you need to do, Director Kim. Oh, Mr. Adam Castler is moving to the location as well. Show him the villa with two rooms, which we talked about the other day."

"Yes, sir. I was going to do that, anyway."

Director Dong-Chan Kim and Mr. Adam Castler started packing their stuff. Once they loaded the 1-ton truck which belonged to GH Mobile's logistics team with their belongings and desks, they headed to Jiksan Town.

It was the day when the former S Group's vice president—Mr. Jang-Hwan Song—finally joined GH Mobile as a co-president.

Gun-Ho called for the managers and executives to his office in order to welcome President Jang-Hwan Song.

"As of today, President Jang-Hwan Song will join us at GH Mobile as our co-president. I don't think I need to introduce him to you since you all know him already. As you all know, he was the vice president of our major customer company—S Group. Let's welcome him on board."

Everyone in the room clapped with a smile.

President Jang-Hwan Song stood up from his seat.

"I appreciate you all welcoming me into your team. It's really good to be here. It's my pleasure and honor to join GH Mobile that is steadily growing. I've been briefed on the general status of GH Mobile. Thanks to President Goo. It is true that GH Mobile's sales revenue is low considering your motivation and drive to work hard. I want to focus on increasing the company's sales revenue. We will spend a lot of time discussing the reasons and ways to improve our situation. Starting this afternoon, I will visit each department and hear a report on the current status of each department. Thank you for your cooperation."

After the meeting was over, President Song and Gun-Ho went to the worksite to meet with other employees. There, President Song was introduced to the assistant managers, supervisors, team leaders, and etc.

The workers kept glancing at Gun-Ho and the new president while working.

They whispered,

"The man over there, he is the new co-president of our company."

"Are we having a second mother-in-law now?"

"Well, he will be mostly nagging the executives, not us."

"Do you think that President Gun-Ho Goo wants to take a step back from the front lines? He has several companies, so maybe he wants to take a chairman position and let the president of each company handle the everyday work."

"You think so? He is way too young to be a chairman. I can't imagine a 30 something years old taking a step back from the daily operations of his companies and let others run them."

The employees in the worksite talked and wondered about what was really going on with their company.

279 Vice President Adam Castler 2 – Part 2

Gun-Ho received a call from his sister.

"Gun-Ho, you haven't heard anything about our aunt, have you?"

"No, I haven't."

"She fell on the stairs in her condo. She has been admitted to a hospital. She can't even stand up by herself."

"Is it that serious? She can't even walk?"

"Yeah, because she is old, and it was a bad fall which gave her a lower back injury."

"Shoot."

"I went to see her at the hospital yesterday. She grabbed my arm and cried hard. She said having children meant nothing."

"Why is she saying that? Jae-Woong did or didn't do something?"

"Every time she had a bad fight with her daughter-in-law, her son became alienated from her. She said she was disappointed in me too."

"You? For what?"

"I told her to stop talking bad about her daughter-in-law and try to get along with her and try to think and talk positive about her. She was very upset when I told her that."

"What did she say?"

"She said there was nothing positive to talk about her daughter-in-law, and she got furious."

"Hmm."

"Well, she is in Gil Hospital, room no. 706. If you happen to be in Incheon area, just stop by. If you are too busy, then you don't have to visit her."

"Okay."

After getting off the phone with his sister, Gun-Ho thought about his aunt.

'She was so proud of her son—Jae-Woong—when he passed the level-9 government job exam. But her life after her precious son's marriage is not very pretty. I wonder how Min-Hyeok Kim is doing between his parents and his wife. He married a Chinese woman. It could go either way, either good or bad as far as the conflict between her and Min-Hyeok's mother is concerned.'

As he was thinking about family issues in general, he realized that he hadn't visited his parents for quite some time.

'I know my dad is receiving a 3 million won monthly salary from GH Mobile as a non-executive director. Is that enough? I wonder how they are doing.'

In the past when Gun-Ho was working as a factory worker after flunking the government job exam multiple times, he was also losing money by investing in the stock market. At that time, he was having an extremely hard time in his life, and he resented his parents for it. He even yelled at his father once.

'I yelled at him and asked him why have me in the first place knowing they didn't have enough money to support a child. My dad must have felt very sad. Without money, a family can't avoid serious discord, and it eventually falls apart.'

Gun-Ho headed to Incheon City to his parents' home. He stopped by a store to get some dried yellow corvina, which was Gun-Ho's father's favorite food, and a box of ginseng extract. He first went to see his aunt to the hospital before heading to his parents' home. He parked his car at the hospital parking lot and purchased a basket of fruits.

"My sister said she is staying in a patient room no. 706."

Gun-Ho was passing by a waiting area in the hospital when he saw Jae-Woong—

his aunt's son—sitting on a chair.

"Huh? Jae-Woong? What are you doing here?"

"Huh? Gun-Ho bro?"

"Why are you sitting at the waiting area?"

"Oh, I came down after seeing my mom upstairs. It's mealtime for patients."

"I see. How's your work at the department of labor?"

"I'm doing fine. I actually wanted to see you, brother."

"Me? Why?"

"Do you know any company I can work for? Your company or a company you know."

"Why? You have a job already in the government."

"I want to quit that job. The government doesn't pay good money, and that causes a lot of troubles in my family."

"Don't say that. A government job is the most stable and desirable work that everyone wants to get in."

"You made a lot of money already by running your own company, and you purchased a 50 pyung condo for your parents and also bought a huge building."

"I was just lucky, and I am one of the unique cases. Your life will become harder if you don't have good employment in this country. Working in the private sector is not a very good idea if you consider job security. Even though you might get a higher salary there, you have to be prepared to be laid off at any time, not to mention that the work itself is more stressful. Working for the government is the best job anyone could ever have."

"I shouldn't have taken my parents' money to buy my home. I should have just rented a condo or something. Whew."

"Why? Your mom helped you a lot when you buy your home?"

"My parents sold their condo in Guweol Town for 180 million won and helped me buy my current home in Gyesan Town. I paid 120 million won for my 17 pyung large condo, and they moved to a rental villa."

"Oh, they did?"

"I had 20 million won in my savings that I saved by working as a government employee at that time, and my parents gave me 100 million won, so I could purchase the condo in Gyesan Town. I shouldn't have done it. I shouldn't have accepted their help..."

"What happened?"

"After my parents gave me 100 million won, my mom asked me to send her some allowance money every month. My wife couldn't take the request well. So the conflict between my mom and my wife started from there."

"You don't have any debt, right?"

"No, I don't."

"That's good. You have your own house without debt. That's good enough. Don't quit your government job. Once you are out from the government, you will realize that you are standing in hell."

Gun-Ho knew Jae-Woong well from his childhood. Jae-Woong was two years younger than Gun-Ho, and he was a good student in school. He was a quiet boy, and he was not a very adventurous or proactive type. He didn't have an aptitude to do sales or developing technology in a company. Jae-Woong seemed to be having a hard time in life, but in Gun-Ho's view, Jae-Woong would do better as time went by; he would get promoted inside the government and that would raise his salary, and his parents would pass away.

"I will go upstairs to see my aunt."

"Okay. I guess she must have finished her meal by now."

Gun-Ho went to the patient room where his aunt was staying in with a basket of fruits in his hand. His aunt was having a conversation with an old lady patient who was lying down on the bed next to hers.

"Aunt!"

"Huh? Oh, Gun-Ho!"

Gun-Ho's aunt seemed to be surprised. She probably didn't expect Gun-Ho to visit her at the hospital at all.

"You didn't have to come, Gun-Ho. I know you are very busy. What is this? You didn't have to bring anything."

Gun-Ho's aunt smiled broadly when she saw the fruit basket that Gun-Ho brought her.

"How are you? Are you in pain?"

"Don't get me started. I can't even go to the bathroom by myself."

"You will get better. The medical technology these days is very well advanced. The doctors will take good care of you."

"Oh, did you see Jae-Woong on the way here? He went down not long ago."

"Yes, I met him. He will come up soon; he wanted to get some fresh air."

"I've raised him for nothing. I gave birth to him, but he is acting like a stranger."

"Haha, don't say that, aunt. You don't mean that."

"A son becomes a stranger once he marries. They always take the side of their wives. Gun-Ho, don't do that to your mom."

The old lady patient on the bed next to Gun-Ho's aunt asked her,

Find authorized novels in Webnovelfaster updates, better experiencePlease click www.webnovel.com for visiting.

"Who is this young man? He is tall and handsome. Very good looking."

"He is my nephew, my older brother's son. He is the one who is making a lot of money and recently bought a building."

"A building? I see. He looks rich."

Gun-Ho laughed.

"Thank you, ma'am. I wish you good health for a long time."

Gun-Ho then stood up from his seat to leave.

"Go, Gun-Ho. You must be very busy."

Gun-Ho took out an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"Aunt, get something to drink with this."

"Oh, you don't have to do that!"

Gun-Ho's aunt didn't refuse to take the envelope; she took it and hid it under the mattress quickly.

"I will tell Jae-Woong to come up to stay with you on my way out."

"Okay. Bye, Gun-Ho. Thank you for coming."

Gun-Ho went down to the waiting area, but he couldn't find Jae-Woong. He thought for a second if he would look for him, but then he decided to just leave, and he headed to Guweol Town where his parents were living.

280 Vice President Adam Castler 3 – Part 1

Gun-Ho arrived at the HillState Condo in Guweol Town where his parents were living in. He entered the access code and got into the condo. There seemed to be no one at home because no one came out to see who just entered the home. Then Gun-Ho found her mother sleeping in the living room. Her mouth was open; she seemed to be having a deep sleep.

"She wouldn't even wake up even if a robber broke into the house."

Gun-Ho walked to his mother and tried to close her mouth, and that woke her up. She seemed to be surprised to see Gun-Ho.

"Huh? Who is this? Gun-Ho is here!"

"No one is home?"

"No. Everyone is out. Your father is probably having a drink with the neighbors. Jeong-Ah is in school, and her parents are at work."

Everything at home looked so peaceful.

"I am on my way from Gil Hospital."

"Gil Hospital? Oh, did you see your aunt?"

"Yes, I did. She said that she felt so much pain in her lower back that she can't even go to the bathroom by herself."

"She had acted as if she could live forever before she got injured in her lower back."

"I bought her something to drink."

"That's good. Did you eat?"

"Yes, I did, mom. How's everyone?"

"Everything is good here, except your dad is drinking too often."

"Does he still go to Jongno 3-ga District?"

"No, he doesn't go there anymore, but he found other places to go regularly. He goes to Oido Island and other islands with his friends."

"Do you think he needs a car?"

"A car? Don't even say the word when your dad is present. He drinks so often. That's worrisome enough for me. I don't want to worry about his driving while being drunk. He actually said he didn't want to drive anymore. He even revoked his driver's license voluntarily."

"Really?"

"When you get old, it's better for your health to walk rather than drive."

"Oh, here, mom. I brought some dried yellow corvina for you and dad."

"Oh, my. This must be very expensive. We are having truly a wonderful life at our ages because of our son."

"And this is a box of KGC (Korean Ginseng Corporation) ginseng extract."

"Oh, ginseng from KGC. Thank you, Gun-Ho."

"And, this is for your travel. I want you and dad to go travel sometimes."

"This is money? We have money...?"

"Just keep it and use it later."

"Some friends asked me to join them to travel to China. They want to go to Zhangjiajie in China. Maybe I can join them."

"Sounds good, mom. Have some fun."

After visiting his parents, Gun-Ho was going to drive back to Cheongan City,

and then he changed his mind and headed to Sinsa Town to his GH Building. He thought he had to stop by there often enough to make sure it was running fine. When he entered the office, Director Kang was arguing with someone on the phone.

Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh was looking at her smartphone and quickly stood up from her seat when she saw Gun-Ho coming into the office.

"Can I get some tea, please?"

"Would you like to have a green tea?"

"I'd like to have a cup of coffee."

Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh brought Gun-Ho a cup of coffee, and a while after, Director Kang entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Sir, you are here."

"I heard you were arguing with somebody on the phone."

"Oh, it was the president of Myeongjin System."

Myeongjin System?"

"You know the staffing company where we use their professionals. We use our own people for parking and cleaning, but for professional works we use their people, especially for the work in the machinery and electricity rooms."

"Hmm, that's right."

"They are asking us to raise those workers' wages because the labor cost increased generally according to them. I told them we could raise the wages starting next year, and they are asking us to raise them starting next month."

"Hmm."

"There are tons of staffing companies we can use. If they keep insisting on it, I'm thinking of changing the staffing company."

The accounting manager entered Gun-Ho's office.

"Sir, since you are here, would you like to hear the monthly report on profit and loss?"

"Well, not right now. I feel so tired today. Why don't you send the report to me through email instead?"

"Yes, sir. I will do that."

Gun-Ho made a tour around the building with Director Kang. By a quick glance, the building looked so marvelous and gorgeous; however, if looked at the building closely, a lot of places showed cracks and stains which required repair jobs.

"I will send Director Yoon from our office in Asan City. You two then make a list of the areas to repair after inspecting the building. We don't have enough funds in our building maintenance reserve yet, so let's just repair the area that we must fix right now, and we can fix other areas later."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho drove back to Jiksan Town.

Once Gun-Ho came back to his office, the co-president—President Jang-Hwan Song and the research center's chief officer—Director Joon-Soo Oh followed Gun-Ho to his office. Gun-Ho wanted to take some rest since he drove a lot that day, but it seemed that his attention was required on too many areas in his business.

"I have something to report to you, sir."

"Okay, have a seat."

Gun-Ho's voice sounded exhausted.

President Song took out some design drawings and said,

"For the first time since I joined GH Mobile, I went and took a look at S Group's factories that I used to work at."

"There are four factories of S Group in Korea, right?"

"There are actually five of them if we include the one in Ulsan City."

"Oh, I see."

"The S Group's executives welcomed my visit and I guess they gave me some privilege since I was once their boss. I made a contract with them for selling them a product. These design drawings are for the product they want to buy from us."

"Haha, really? You did a good job."

"If we manufacture this product as shown in these drawings, I believe we can expect our monthly sales revenue to increase by 1 billion won."

"Oh, really?"

"There is one problem though. In order to successfully produce this product, we first need to do some experiments. This company previously went through the reduction in size and number of workers with the research center, and many research workers had been relocated to another department. We can't ask those people who are already working with another department to come back to the research center and they are sort of old for the research work anyway."

"You are suggesting hiring new workers for the research center?"

"Yes. I'd like to make a team with young and smart researchers."

"How many do you need?"

The new chief officer of the research center chipped in.

"We will need five for now, and we can hire more people as we get more work and as we generate more revenue."

"Will we need an additional production line because of the new order from S Group?"

"Maybe later, but not now. We can use the existing production line at night if necessary for now."

"I do agree with hiring additional workers for the research center. From now on, I won't get involved in hiring workers except for the executives. So, please start the hiring process without me, including the first and second interview or final interview."

"But..."

Gun-Ho smiled.

"It's okay. I do trust you two. You don't need me in selecting decent workers. You are more knowledgeable than me in the field."

"Thank you, sir."

The research center's chief officer and President Song left Gun-Ho's office after giving him a bow.

281 Vice President Adam Castler 3 – Part 2

President Song had been treating Gun-Ho as his younger brother when he worked as a vice president of S Group. Gun-Ho used to refer to him as his older brother as well. However, after he joined GH Mobile, President Song changed his attitude toward Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was the owner of the company after all, and he had to respect that. President Song seemed to be submissive and gentle with Gun-Ho now. Just like the internal auditor, who used to work as a branch manager of a bank and a vice president of Capital before joining GH, became submissive with Gun-Ho, President Song was becoming submissive as well.

Gun-Ho stretched himself in his office when he was left by himself. He felt like his head and mind became clear and fresh again.

'I am really hoping that President Song helps GH Mobile to increase its sales revenue dramatically. It will incur higher expenses in the process, of course, but I will be able to make a significant amount of money as the sales revenue gets substantial.'

Gun-Ho then thought.

'Once GH Mobile or Dyeon Korea started making a substantial amount of money, I will probably let either company acquire GH Building in Seoul. The loan for the building is too much. If one of my companies with a significant amount of revenue acquires that building, I believe I can recover my 40 billion won that I invested in that building. No matter which company, either GH Mobile or Dyeon Korea, purchases the building, the building is mine anyway.'

He then thought.

'Let me see. Lymondell Dyeon owns 50% of Dyeon Korea. Even though I want Dyeon Korea to acquire the building, Lymondell Dyeon will probably reject the suggestion. Even though I successfully let Dyeon Korea acquire the building, I will have to discuss everything with Lymondell Dyeon, and it will intervene in managing the building too. Let's opt out of that option then. It's not wise for me

to let Dyeon Korea purchase the building and bring Lymondell Dyeon into the building management business. What about GH Media? Well, it's a tiny company, I don't even need to consider it. Hmm. Then I am left with the option of GH Mobile acquiring the building. President Song has 3% of GH Mobile. The question is whether he would voice the building matter with his 3% share. I guess I can just ignore it since I have a 97% ownership of GH Mobile.'

Gun-Ho was thinking of all the options he could think of with GH Building, he received a call from China. It was Professor Jien Wang.

"President Goo? It's me, Jien Wang."

"Oh, Jien Wang!"

"I'm going to Seoul next week."

"Really? You sound exciting, Jien. Any good news?"

"There will be a symposium in Seoul National University, and I will be taking part in it. Why don't you come? Oh, you said you are not in Seoul, but in a province, right?"

"How long are you staying? I can make a reservation at a hotel for you."

"Don't worry about it. I will be staying for four days, and Seoul National University will find a room for me to stay. I think I will stay in one of their dormitories designed for professors."

"Really? That sounds good."

"I will have one day off during the fourth day of my stay. Let's play golf with Attorney Young-Jin Kim."

"Sure. Just give me the date when you know it for sure. I will make a reservation for the three of us."

"According to Attorney Kim, there are lots of nice golf courses in Cheonan City where you are right now."

"That's right. Come to Cheonan City then. I want to show you my factory too."

"That sounds great."

When Gun-Ho got off the phone with Professor Jien Wang, Director Dong-Chan Kim entered the office.

"I have something to report to you, sir."

"You could have just given me a call for a report. You didn't have to come all the way from Asan City to Jiksan Town for a report."

"We moved into the container office already. It looks nicer than I expected."

"Good work."

"And I showed Mr. Adam Castler the villa with two rooms. He seemed to be content. He said he liked it. He also said the villa looks much better than the one he stayed when he worked in Mexico."

"Really? That's good."

"And forming a Dyeon Korea's operating committee was an excellent idea, sir."

"That's nice. I knew it would turn out great because our executive committee here in GH Mobile is working great. I knew the same system would apply well to Dyeon Korea too."

"Dyeon Korea's operating committee is currently composed of five members: myself, Mr. Adam Castler, GH Mobile's general affairs director and accounting manager, and Director Yoon. We all know well and we are familiar with the work we are doing, so we were able to answer any questions Mr. Adam Castler asked so far."

"Are you having the operating committee's meeting once a week?"

"Yes, sir."

"Once a week should be enough. If you have the meeting too often, that could disturb a daily work of everyone. And by having a meeting regularly, you can all learn things from each other."

"That's right. And having the accounting manager as a member of the committee was a good decision as well."

"Really?"

"The accounting manager is extremely meticulous, maybe because the manager is female. She keeps records of two companies' initial investment funds of 50,000 dollars from each party, and gives us a report on the expenses during each meeting."

"Hmm."

"What we spent on Mr. Adam Castler's staying takes a significant part of our current expenses, including his hotel, car rental, meals, and etc. When Mr. Adam Castler realizes that, he told me that he wanted to move to the villa as soon as possible. We are using the joint venture's funds for everything except the construction cost."

"We don't want Mr. Adam Castler to spend too much money, but don't give him too much pressure for it."

"Understood, sir. I will ask the accounting manager to send the weekly expense report to you, sir."

"Don't do that. You get the report and review it. I don't have to review it."

"But..."

"I have so many things I have to think about right now. Just do as I say."

"Yes, sir."

"How did the hiring process go?"

"We just completed the first interview. We will have the second interview tomorrow. Mr. Adam Castler will join us for tomorrow's interview. We will have the interview in the small meeting room here in this building. I don't think it's a good idea having a job interview in a container office."

"Okay. Sounds good."

"And, umm... about the interpreter—Mr. Lee."

"What about him? Something happened to him?"

"He is still young and he is 53 years old. I think he can still work vigorously."

"I think so."

"He has an extensive work experience as an employee and he had worked abroad before. I think he can be an asset to our company—the joint venture. I haven't talked to him about this. I wanted to talk with you first. It's just my personal opinion."

"Hmm."

"When we sell Dyeon Korea's products to China and Southeast Asia, President Min-Hyeok Kim can handle the China market. I think Mr. Lee can take charge of the Southeast Asia market."

"Well... You are right. He speaks English fluently and he used to run a branch office abroad... His qualification fits the job."

"Since he has been working with us as an interpreter for our joint venture matters, he is now very familiar with our operating system."

"I know that... The thing that bothers me is that I heard if someone had quit his employer previously, then he wouldn't be very loyal to the next employer."

"I don't think that applies to him..."

"Well, I will discuss this with President Jeong-Sook Shin in GH Media. She was the one who recommended him to us. I do like him too. Let's think about it."

"Yes, sir."

Director Dong-Chan Kim gave a bow to Gun-Ho and left the office.

282 Plant Manager— Director Jong-Suk Park 1 – Part 1

The cherry blossoms were in full bloom. Those three workers of GH Mobile, who went to the U.S. to receive training from Lymondell Dyeon, finally came back. Every single worker in GH Mobile greeted them and they were happy to have them back after the long one month of their absence.

The three workers went to Gun-Ho's office to give him a report.

"Welcome back. We missed you all."

Gun-Ho had a handshake with each of the three workers and tapped their backs.

"Director Jong-Suk Park, you now look a bit like American. Did you add too much butter in your diet during your stay in the U.S.?"

Everyone in the office laughed.

After the three workers left the office, Director Dong-Chan Kim came in.

"Sir, two workers out of the three who just came back from the training in the U.S. are researchers. Please relocate them to Dyeon Korea."

"We don't even have any equipment in Dyeon Korea yet. What about we send them after we install the necessary equipment and machines there?"

"That sounds good, but even before we get the equipment, we have a preparation that we have to make, so I think it's better to have them in Dyeon Korea once the building is completed."

"Hmm. Okay then."

"And what about Director Jong-Suk Park? The position of the plant manager with GH Mobile is vacant since our plant manager retired and took an advisory position. Director Jong-Suk Park had been temporarily filling the work. If we send him to Dyeon Korea, no one will be here to do the work."

"Hmm. Director Park will stay here with GH Mobile then."

"That sounds good, sir. Director Jong-Suk Park had an extensive work experience in the production field rather than in a research center, he is really good with machines and equipment."

"Do you think so?"

"One of our extruding machines had a broken screw once, and Director Park dismantled the machine immediately and changed the screw. When I worked for Mulpasaneop, we usually requested a service to an outside company to do the repair like that."

"Haha, really?"

"Even though Director Park stays with GH Mobile, I guess we can ask him to come to Dyeon Korea sometimes if we need his help there."

"Of course."

"Okay then, sir. I will be leaving for the factory in Asan City."

Gun-Ho received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim; he said he would soon visit Korea for a few days.

"My parents purchased the condo in Hyundai HomeTown in Juan Town. Thanks to you. I applied for a loan to Kookmin Bank for the amount short to the purchasing price. The bank asked me to visit their office in Korea to sign the loan documents, so I will be coming to Korea tomorrow."

"I see. Why don't you stop by here in Jiksan Town? It has been a while since I saw you."

"Sure. After I sign the loan documents, I will go to Jiksan Town right away. I can take the subway. Once I arrive at the Jiksan Station, I guess I can take a taxi to get to the factory, right?"

"Why don't you just give me a call when you pass Osan Station, then I will leave to Jiksan Station to pick you up."

"You shouldn't drive to pick me up. You are the president. Just send someone."

"A president is the person with the most flexible schedule. So I guess I am the right person to do the job."

"Well, if you insist. I will see you tomorrow then."

Gun-Ho was reading a cartoon book in his office after having a sauna when Director Jong-Suk Park entered the office. Director Park recently came back from the U.S. after receiving training from Lymondell Dyeon. Director Park was holding a small wrapped box.

"Bro, this is for you..."

"What is it?"

"It's a handkerchief."

"A handkerchief?"

"Since you have everything you need, I just bought you a handkerchief."

"Thank you. I was actually going to get a handkerchief. I needed one. Did you get something for your girlfriend?"

"Yes, I did."

"Did you buy her pricey cosmetics maybe?"

Jong-Suk didn't say what he actually bought for her girlfriend, but he just smiled.

"Oh, you know what? Egnopak's president's son—Dong-Hwan Kim came here once with three bouncers or his bodyguards. I don't know who they are, but you know what I mean."

"Did you kick them out? He is cocky that he thinks he can just visit someone's company just like that."

"He actually came to apologize to me. I couldn't kick him out."

"If I was here, I would certainly have beaten him up before kicking him out."

"One of the bouncers said that they were beaten up hard by you. One of them lost a few teeth."

"I should have aimed their ribs to break, not their teeth."

"By the way, I have been wondering if what you said is true. When we were attacked, you shouted that you used to be a gang member, and you say that again whenever you encounter those gangsters. Did you really involve yourself in that field?"

"Yes, bro. You probably don't know because you were serving in the military at that time. I really had a very tough life back then."

"Really?"

"I was arrested a few times and spent a few nights in the police station."

"Did you also serve time in prison?"

"I did until one of my relatives got me released. He was a high ranked officer in the police."

"Haha. That's why you keep talking about those days whenever you have a chance."

"I was actually very famous in the field in the Incheon City area."

"Really?"

"You know, the bouncer— Tae-Young Im, he is now calling me big brother after I talked to him about a few of my friends in the field."

"Really?"

"To be honest with you, I have only two persons I am scared of in this world."

"Two persons? Who are they?"

"My father and you, Gun-Ho bro!"

"Me? What did I do? Do you think I'm going to bite you?"

"I don't know. Sometimes you just scare me."

"You are silly."

"I gotta go now. I need to turn off the extruder switch."

"Okay."

Jong-Suk was walking toward the office door to leave when he saw a cartoon book placed on Gun-Ho's desk.

"Haha. Isn't it for a kid, Mr. President? Are you seriously reading a cartoon book?"

"Oh, this? It's a cartoon series about world history. It has been published by GH Media. Jae-Sik Moon actually edited it."

"Really? I will get one for myself to read."

Gun-Ho flashed back to the day when he first saw Jong-Suk.

Gun-Ho was a fifth-grader at that time and he was on his way home from school. Jong-Suk was surrounded by several boys and he was being beaten up by them. They were in a neighbor's town.

"Huh? I know him. That boy is from my town. Hey, you sons of b*tches!"

Gun-Ho ran toward the group of boys who were beating Jong-Suk and chased them out. When kids are little, the one-year age gap makes a huge difference in size of their bodies. Gun-Ho was two years older than Jong-Suk and he was about 1 foot taller than the boys at Jong-Suk's age. The boys quickly ran away when they saw Gun-Ho who was taller than them running toward them.

Jong-Suk was crying. Jong-Suk was bleeding from his forehead. It seemed one of the boys hit Jong-Suk's head with a stone or something.

"You are bleeding a lot. Let me get you home quickly!"

283 Plant Manager— Director Jong-Suk Park 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho took Jong-Suk who was bleeding from his forehead to his home. Jong-Suk's parents were running a Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup) restaurant at the entrance of the town. When Jong-Suk entered the restaurant with his forehead bleeding, his parents were surprised.

"What is this? Who did this to you!?"

"I found him fighting with the kids from our neighbor town."

"Who are they?! I will kick their as*es!"

Jong-Suk's mother looked very upset.

"They are all gone already."

Jong-Suk's mother returned to Jong-Suk to check his wound.

"It's not that serious, son. You don't need any stitches. Let me get some ointment and I will take care of it. You will be fine."

Jong-Suk's mother went to the pharmacy across the street and bought some ointment and band-aids. After treating Jong-Suk with ointment and band-aids, Jong-Suk's mother turned her head to Gun-Ho and thanked him.

"You are the boy from the house up there, right? Thank you for bringing my boy home."

Gun-Ho was about to leave after giving a bow to Jong-Suk's mother when she offered food.

"You haven't eaten yet, right? Come here, boy. Let me get you a Seolleongtang."

It was Gun-Ho's first Seolleongtang ever in his entire life. It was so good. Gun-Ho ate it all in no time.

After the incident, Jong-Suk and Gun-Ho became best friends. Jong-Suk was very social and he liked Gun-Ho a lot. Jong-Suk followed Gun-Ho everywhere like a small puppy.

Gun-Ho received a phone call from Director Dong-Chan Kim who was in the factory in Asan City.

"Sir, I am calling to let you know something. I should have gone to Jiksan Town to talk to you in person, and I am sorry about it, sir."

"No, no need to. As long as it's not something urgent, you don't have to come all the way to Jiksan Town just to talk to me. What is it that you want to talk to me about?"

"We are having a Dyeon Korea's operating committee meeting the day after tomorrow. You know, the regular meeting that we have once a week."

"Why don't you have the meeting here in GH Mobile's building? You don't have a spacious office there yet."

"Yes, we are actually planning to do that, sir. And for our next meeting, we'd like to invite those three workers who recently came back from the training in the U.S."

"Sure. We can certainly arrange that."

"I think we need to hear their experience at the training before we receive our equipment. So that we can be better prepared and hit the ground running."

"That's a good idea."

"I will let the general affairs director know that you approved the meeting, sir. Thank you."

After getting off the phone with Director Kim from Dyeon Korea, Gun-Ho received another phone call from Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Hi, Gun-Ho, I arrived in Korea yesterday. I am in Kookmin Bank right now, and I don't think I can go to Jiksan Town before lunchtime."

"Why not?"

"I need to get a document from the community service center. The bank people here are so particular that they refused to process the loan without full documentation in hand."

"Why don't you come to the office here early tomorrow morning then? We will have a meeting with the executives, and I want you to join us to the meeting. If you have something to ask, it's a good opportunity to talk about it."

"Sounds good. I heard Jong-Suk came back to Korea, didn't he?"

"Yeah. He is here. You will see him tomorrow."

"Okay. I will see you tomorrow then."

Min-Hyeok Kim arrived at GH Mobile in the following morning around 8 am.

"Bro! Min-Hyeok bro!"

"Hey, Jong-Suk! Good to see you, man."

"I came to pick you up. Gun-Ho bro sent me and he is very busy now."

"Of course. A president of the company shouldn't drive around just to pick up someone. I am very honored that Director Jong-Suk Park is here to pick me up. You look sophisticated, Jong-Suk. Is it because you stayed in the U.S. for long enough?"

"You look great yourself, bro. Is it because you are married?"

"Haha. Give me a hug. I am so happy to see you again, man."

"Sure. Why not? Come here. Haha."

Jong-Suk and Min-Hyeok arrived at GH Mobile in Jiksan Town. And they went upstairs straight to Gun-Ho's office. Gun-Ho was talking with President Jang-Hwan Song.

"Hey, President Min-Hyeok Kim. It's good to see you. You are right on time. This is President Jang-Hwan Song. He is our new co-president."

"Hello, sir. Nice to meet you. I'm Min-Hyeok Kim. I've heard a lot about you."

"Nice to meet you, too. I'm Jang-Hwan Song."

After having a handshake, Min-Hyeok and President Song sat at the table.

Gun-Ho was about to say something when the general affairs director entered the office.

"Sir, we are ready to start the meeting. Everyone is in the meeting room waiting for you."

"Really? Let's go and join them in the meeting room."

When Gun-Ho entered the meeting room, everyone in the room stood up from their seats, and they noticed Min-Hyeok Kim behind Gun-Ho.

"Hey, President Kim! When did you come to Korea?"

"Hello."

"Are we going to have President Kim in our meeting from now on?"

"No. This is just a one-time thing. Since I am here today, Mr. President asked me to join you at the meeting. I'm so glad to see you all. You all look great."

"Okay. Let's have a seat."

The table in this small meeting room was a long and square conference table which could accommodate more than twenty people. Gun-Ho sat in the middle, and on his right and left side, all the executive officers were sitting. During the last meeting, Gun-Ho asked President Song to sit next to him since he is the co-president, but he insisted on sitting on Gun-Ho's left side and on the first seat. On the first seat of Gun-Ho's right side, the internal auditor was sitting on. Jong-Suk and President Min-Hyeok Kim sat on the last seats of the right and left sides. Dyeon Korea's director Kim and Director Yoon attended the meeting that day per Gun-Ho's special request. Everyone in the meeting room was wearing a company uniform with an ID card hanging around their necks. They also all carried a notebook with the company logo on.

The general affairs director stood up.

"We now begin the GH Mobile's executive meeting. We have today President Gun-Ho Goo, President Jang-Hwan Song, Internal Auditor Hee-Suk Goh, Dyeon Korea's Director Dong-Chan Kim, Dyeon Korea's Director Hee-Byeong Yoon, Chief Officer Joon-Soo at the research center, President Min-Hyeok Kim from China, Director Jong-Suk Park from the production department, and myself from the general affairs department. A total of 9 people are attending today's meeting. We have a special guest from China, President Min-Hyeok Kim. Please welcome him with a round of applause."

After the general affairs director mentioned Min-Hyeok, Min-Heyok stood up from his seat and bowed to everyone.

"Thank you."

"Let's start the meeting. We will start with the report on the production and sales, and then we will hear from the maintenance and support department. Today's meeting will end after our president's comment."

Once the general affairs director sat on his chair, President Jang-Hwan Song started talking about the current status of GH Mobile's sales.

284 Plant Manager— Director Jong-Suk Park 2 – Part 1

President Song talked about the new product order received by S Group during the meeting.

"I've already talked about this with President Gun-Ho Goo. We made a contract with S Group, and their three factories in Suwon City, Changweon City, Ulsan City placed five product orders from us. This contract will increase our monthly sales revenue by 1 billion won, but they will increase the volume of their orders as we prove that our products are of high quality."

Gun-Ho asked the internal auditor,

"If we include this new contract in our total sales revenue, how much will it be?"

"When you acquired Mulpasaneop, the annual sales revenue was 70 billion won, and it increased to 84 billion won as we developed our new product—AM083. If we add the new product order which President Song brought in, our total sales revenue will be about 96 billion won."

Dyeon Korea's Director Dong-Chan Kim chipped in.

"The new order from S Group requires us to develop new products. As our new chief officer at the research center is well aware, developing a new product is not an easy task at all. It will cost us multiple attempts until we finally develop a new product. To be honest, AM083 was not technically developed by us, but it was developed by the Japanese engineer—Mr. Sakata Ikuzo—at our research center for us."

After Director Kim's reality check, everyone in the room lowered their heads and stared at their notebook without saying a word.

Director Kim continued to talk. He could be very convincing when he talked as he was when he convinced the potential buyers to sell the products.

"Also, we are currently relying heavily on S Group for our sales. We will have to diversify our customer companies. Focusing on one customer company could lead our company to being dependent on one customer, which could be dangerous in the long-term. I am not saying we should stop receiving product orders from S Group. I just want to emphasize the gravity of being self-sufficient without becoming dependent on one specific buyer company."

Min-Hyeok Kim, who was sitting at the end of the conference table, was envious of Director Dong-Chan Kim's communication skills.

'He is indeed a great salesperson with a very convincing sales pitch. Even his voice is really good and his voice is very smooth and comfortable to listen to, not to mention it is very persuading. I will have to learn from him if I want to seriously increase the sales revenue for the company in China.'

"Please allow me to add to it."

Everyone at the table turned their heads to see the person who just chipped in. It was the new chief officer at the research center. He received his Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany, and he used to work at H Auto's research center in Korea.

"As to the two products out of five that S Group wants to buy from us, our researchers already started producing a sample product. If we succeed in making the mold for those products, we will be able to manufacture the products in no time. However, in developing and making some experiments in the process for the other three products, we need more workers at our research center. So, we are in the process of hiring five new researchers. The first interview is completed and we have 30 candidates to interview for the second time. We will select the best five from them."

Director Kim chipped in.

"The two researchers who just came back from training in the U.S. need to be relocated to Dyeon Korea."

The research center's chief officer seemed to be upset when he heard that he might lose his two researchers.

"We can't lose those two researchers. As I just mentioned, we are seriously in

need of more researchers. They should stay with GH Mobile."

Director Kim didn't back off. He blushed and said,

"If they would stay in GH Mobile, then why were they sent to the U.S. for the training by Lymondell Dyeon in the first place?"

"Excuse me? Are you seriously asking that?"

Min-Hyeok was amazed at the passion of the executives in the meeting, and the heat they created in debating.

"Wow. They are truly enthusiastic about their work."

Director Jong-Suk Park was quiet. He couldn't chip in with his short work experience in the management field.

Gun-Ho finally intervened.

"Okay. That's enough. Listen all. I understand why some of you had to raise your voice. I know you are worried about our company, and I appreciate that. You said we have 30 candidates who passed the first interview. Why don't you select seven workers instead of five out of 30 during the second interview? It would be better to have enough workers at this phase of our company."

"Yes, sir."

"Yes, sir."

Director Kim and the research center's chief officer stopped debating once Gun-Ho gave a final word to the issue.

Gun-Ho then looked at Min-Hyeok.

"President Min-Hyeok Kim, it has been a while since we had you here last time in our meeting. Do you have anything to add?"

"Umm..."

Min-Hyeok seemed to be baffled when he was asked unexpectedly, and Gun-Ho smiled.

"Take your time."

"Well, the sales revenue of GH Parts Company in China has increased somewhat; however, there is no dramatic change yet. S Group currently has four factories in China: Beijing, Chongjin, Cheongdo and Suzhou City. I would really appreciate it if President Song, who used to work for S Group, could visit us in China and visit those factories with me."

"Sure thing. Once things settle here, I will go and join you in China for the tour."

Gun-Ho then turned his attention to the other directors.

"Mr. Director Yoon of construction and Mr. Director Choi from the general affairs department, do you have anything to add?"

"Nothing, sir."

"What about Director Park from the production department?"

"I have nothing to add, sir."

"I do."

The new co-president—President Song—raised his hand.

"Once we produce a sample product and once the product is approved, the buyer company will send their inspectors to our company to check our manufacturing environment. I know Director Park will handle the situation very well, but we need to keep in mind that the factory has to maintain a clean environment including machines and equipment. We need to give the inspectors a good impression. I am requesting to start My Machine."

"Huh? My Machine?"

"Yes. It is a program where we assign one machine to each worker at the production site, so each worker can take good care of the machine he was assigned to. That way, we can make sure all the machines in our factory are always well taken care of and in a clean condition."

Director Kim chipped in.

"I support the suggestion. I do believe it is necessary that we start the My Machine program in our factory. Mr. Director Jong-Suk Park, why don't you ask the managers in the production department to implement the program during your next meeting within the production department?"

"Okay. I will do that."

"Okay. I guess that's all for today. If anyone of you wants to add anything, it's time to do so. Otherwise, we will end the meeting now. Thank you all for your good work."

Once Gun-Ho said the final word, everyone in the room stood up to get ready to leave the room.

Min-Hyeok Kim followed Gun-Ho to the president's office.

"Have a seat. Let's have some coffee."

285 Plant Manager— Director Jong-Suk Park 2 – Part 2

"I was so amazed by the executives' passion and insight. It's not something you can learn overnight, but I could see that they have been in the field for a long time. I guess they deserve to be in an executive position in the company."

"You think so?"

"They are amazing, but you are incredible as well, President Goo. You are leading those people. I was extremely impressed today by those executives and you—their leader."

"Me... I am just trying to keep the balance between them."

"By the way, Jong-Suk will have a hard time doing things to satisfy those knowledgeable executives. What did they say? My Machine program? Hahaha."

"Are you having fun? Why don't you introduce that program to the factory in China, so you can continuously have fun there?"

Min-Hyeok's face suddenly hardened when Gun-Ho suggested him to start the My Machine program in China.

"Is there anything you want to talk to me about? Anything I can help with the factory in China?"

"I just need President Song in China, so I can visit S Group's factories there with him. His presence will be very helpful in selling our products to S Group. If we could make a contract with S Group, our sales revenue will go up dramatically."

"If you could get orders from S Group, can you handle the volume of the products they would order?"

"That's... I am thinking of making a request to the research center here for our products in China. We don't have enough workers there to handle it."

"I will ask President Song to visit China as soon as we finalize things here."

"I really appreciate it."

"By the way, Professor Jien Wang is coming to Korea today."

"To Korea?"

"Yes, Seoul National University is hosting a symposium, and Professor Wang will do a presentation there."

"Is he coming here too?"

"He will, and we will play golf together, and Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim & Jeong Law Firm will join us."

"Really?"

"When you have time, learn how to play golf. It's useful to know. You will need it someday."

"Actually, the president of the window manufacturing company asked me to play golf with him the other day, and I couldn't because I don't know how to play golf. I've never even touched golf clubs before."

"I strongly recommend you to learn it. Take some lessons and pay for it with the company credit card."

Secretary Hee-Jeong Park brought two cups of coffee to Gun-Ho's office.

"When are your parents moving to the new condo in Seoul?"

"They will move on the fifth of this month. We paid off the remaining balance yesterday."

"They must be very happy."

"Don't get me started. We went to the new condo yesterday, and when my mom saw the empty condo, she was so excited. She kept asking me if it is really ours, and she even danced in the living room."

"Haha. Really?"

"My mom didn't even want to redo the wallpaper; she said it still looks really clean. But I insisted on doing the wallpaper and redoing the bathroom. I already selected the interior design company and scheduled for the work. My younger brother joined us to the condo after work, and he was so excited too."

"Really?"

"My younger brother said that since our parents will live in a condo like that, he thinks he can find someone to marry more quickly."

"I must have met your brother before, but I don't really remember him."

"He was not a very good student when he was in school. He studied in a community college and obtained a level-1 license as an electrician. He entered a good company though, and the company owner values him and recognizes his competence at work."

"You said he is working for a company that is doing subcontracting work for Korea Electric Power Corporation, right?"

"Yeah. The company's name is Ilsin Electricity. The company has been around for a long time, according to my brother. Do you know what my brother said about me?"

"What did he say?"

"He said, I became successful in my career because I have a good friend."

"Haha. He is silly."

"He said that just because I have a good friend, I was able to become a president of a company in China, and I could get married and live in a luxurious condo in China, and also, we could purchase a 30 pyung large condo in Incheon City. He said that he wouldn't be able to do the same if it was him."

"Haha. Your brother is funny."

"Actually, what he said was all true. I do have a good friend. After the wedding

in Incheon City, I am going to focus all my energy on making GH Parts Company in China grow. I was so worried about my parents, but now they are settled, and I am very happy."

"Did those people from Dandong Economic Development Zone contact you again?"

"Yes, once. They were asking if I had a chance to discuss their suggestion with you. They invited us at Dandong Economic Development Zone."

"You are going back to China today, aren't you?"

"Yeah. I'm taking the five o'clock flight."

"Well, you'd better hurry up then. You should get ready. I guess you won't be able to have lunch with our executives today before you leave."

"Right. I am leaving, friend. I will talk to Jong-Suk downstairs before I head out."

"Okay. Keep up the good work. I will see you at your wedding in Incheon after a month."

It was five o'clock and Gun-Ho was getting ready to go home. Gun-Ho always tried to get off work at five to make other workers feel more comfortable. If he stayed late at work, other employees felt very uncomfortable leaving the work until Gun-Ho left for home.

Gun-Ho was heading to the parking lot when he saw Jong-Suk nearby the company restaurant. Jong-Suk looked exhausted.

"Bro, are you going home?"

"You look so tired."

"I have to stay up late today. Why don't you join me for dinner before going home?"

"You have so much work to do?"

"Yeah. I had to take care of that My Machine thing. I implemented the plan in detail with the production department's managers and team leaders and placed the tags on every machine. It took a lot of time."

"Really? You are doing fine."

"Well, now I think it is a good program. The problem is whether we can maintain it as a system for a long time."

"Okay, keep up the good work. You are the plant manager; you should be able to handle all sorts of situations."

"My life became so exhausting after the previous plant manager retired."

"Because you work so hard, people don't talk bad behind your back like you are too young to be a plant manager or something."

"That's because you are behind my back, bro."

"Oh, Min-Hyeok said he wanted to talk to you before he left for China. Did you have a chance to see him earlier?"

"Yes."

"Did you guys talk about something fun?"

"Nah. He wanted to know more about the My Machine program. He made a note and observed us have a discussion about the program."

"Really?"

"He said he wanted to apply the My Machine program to the factory in China too. He asked me to take some pictures of machine tags and our daily journal once we actually start the program."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho didn't say anything further and just smiled.

"Okay. Good work, Jong-Suk. I am going home now."

"Okay. Safe drive, bro."

Gun-Ho was watching TV in his home in Buldang Town, Cheonan City after work when he received a phone call from Jien Wang.

"Hey, Jien Wang. Are you at the Incheon International Airport?"

"No. I arrived earlier. I am in the dormitory at Seoul National University."

"You sound like you already had a drink, huh?"

"Yeah. I had a few drinks with the professors here at Seoul National University."

"You know Seoul National University is the top university in Korea, right? So those professors are the most intelligent and the most knowledgeable people in this country."

"Intelligent my ass*. They are not special at all. They are all the same."

"Well, the professors at Seoul National University are one of the most respected people in Korea."

"They are just scholars. Professors don't make much money, and they don't have any political power or anything like that."

"Professors are not supposed to go after money or power."

"They shouldn't, right? But there are always people who do what they are not supposed to do whether in China or in Korea."

"Haha. I think you drank too much, friend. Go to sleep. You are coming here the day after tomorrow, right? I've already made an arrangement for our golf appointment."

"You said the golf course is close to your factory, right?"

"Yes, it is. It's called Sangrok Country Club. I reserved for 27 holes for us. It is operated by the National Pension Service of Korea, and their green fee is not expensive at all."

"Pension? Is it like Yanglao Jin in China?"

"That's right."

"Okay, Gun-Ho. Thank you. You are indeed my friend, and I am so proud of you."

286 Plant Manager — Director Jong-Suk Park 3 – Part 1

Every morning, the accounting manager brought a daily financial report to the president's office for Gun-Ho to review. The report was already reviewed and signed by the internal auditor. It usually included detailed statements of deposits and withdrawals, electronic promissory notes, and B2B payments of the previous day.

"Please take the report to President Song as well."

"I tried, sir, but he refused to review it. He said he wants to focus only on sales and production."

"Hmm. He said so?"

It seemed that President Song was a very careful man. He didn't want to give Gun-Ho the impression that he was trying to involve himself in managing the company too much and too deeply even though Gun-Ho was the one who offered a co-president position to him in the first place.

After the accounting manager left the office, the sales department's manager—Chang-Hoon Seo—entered the office. He was one of those people who were recently promoted.

"Did Director Dong-Chan Kim hand over all the work in the sales department to you before he left for Dyeon Korea?"

"Yes, he did. I sometimes give him a call when I have something to ask him."

"That's good. A sale is very important to our business. It's not an overstatement when we say a company's business is dependent on its sales activities."

"We are doing our best, sir. We received a new order from Seongchang Corp. of 50,000 sealants. This is probably a one-time order, so it won't be very helpful in the long-term though."

"Really?"

"Yes, sir. Director Jong-Suk Park said he would use the Production Line 4 to produce the sealants. He said the machines in Line 4 are not doing anything right now."

"Well, it can be a good start. They might place more orders of the same products or even other products. We will have to make the best products we could on every order."

"Understood, sir."

"Any other thing you want to make a report to me?"

"Umm... Sangweon Industry's president's son is getting married soon. I was not sure how much money gift do we need to make for it."

"Sangweon Industry is one of our major customer companies. We are selling our products to them for 200 million won per month. Where is the wedding venue?"

"It's at the Hilton Hotel in Seoul. It's on next Saturday, sir."

"I will attend his wedding. It's Sangweon Industry; I'd better go there and congratulate him on his son's wedding. They are an important customer to us. Tell the general affairs department to prepare a congratulatory flower wreath with my name on it and send it to them on the wedding day."

"Yes, sir. I will leave his wedding invitation letter here."

When Sales Manager Chang-Hwan Seo was walking toward the door to leave, Gun-Ho called him.

"Oh, Manager Seo. I knew you recently had your own wedding. I was in Japan at that time, and I am sorry that I couldn't attend your wedding."

"No, sir. Don't say that. I received your wedding money gift. It was a lot, and I really appreciate it. I also know that you instructed all of the executives to come to my wedding. I had lots of people at my wedding to congratulate me. Thank you, sir."

"Where are you living right now?"

"I am living in Ssangyong Town, Cheonan City, sir."

After reviewing the daily report, Gun-Ho went to the construction site in Asan City. There were three container offices placed at the entrance of the construction site. One was for Director Yoon, and one was shared by Mr. Adam Castler and Director Dong-Chan Kim. Also, the interpreter—Mr. Lee—was there too, so a small desk was added. The office was certainly not spacious; they were actually very small to be shared by three people. The other one was used by the construction workers for their break time. There was only one portable toilet for their use. The setting was very uncomfortable for all the people who were working there, but they didn't complain because their state-of-the-art factory was being built, and it was almost done. They were just hoping that the building would be built more quickly.

"How are you all?"

When Gun-Ho entered the construction site, Director Kim and the interpreter stood up and greeted him. Mr. Adam Castler stood up from his seat and shouted, "Good morning."

Gun-Ho looked at the interpreter and said,

"Can you ask Mr. Adam Castler if he is comfortable working here?"

After the interpreter asked Mr. Castler in English, Mr. Castler smiled broadly and said,

"No problem."

Director Yoon was at the construction site and ran to the container office when he heard that Gun-Ho was here.

"Sir, you are here?"

"How are you, Director Yoon?"

"The building is completed. We are working on the electric wires right now."

"Really?"

"Would you like to have a cup of coffee, sir? We do have a vending machine in the resting area."

"Haha. No, thank you. I've already had my morning coffee, but thank you for offering."

Gun-Ho entered the container office, which was being used by Director Yoon. There was a small round table that was probably good for three or four people, and it enabled them to have a meeting there. Director Dong-Chan Kim followed Gun-Ho to the container office.

"I guess we need to start preparing for the building dedication ceremony again."

"We can make it very similar to the building dedication ceremony we had for the factory in Jiksan Town. Will it be okay?"

"Sure. But this time we will have to invite all the officials from the local government in Asan City. You can ask the general affairs director—Director Choi—for it. This factory construction has drawn a lot of attention when it was mentioned in the local newspaper because of the assault incident nearby Onyang Hot Spring Hotel last time."

"Understood, sir."

"How is it going with hiring an employee for Dyeon Korea?"

"I have the two best candidates, and I haven't decided who I should select yet."

"Both candidates speak English well?"

"Yes, they do. Would you like to take a look at their resumes, sir?"

"No, it's okay. If you can't select only one person because you like them both, you can hire them all."

"Thank you, sir. That's a relief. I guess I will take them both."

Director Kim looked excited and smiled broadly.

When Gun-Ho came back to his office in Jiksan Town after visiting the construction site in Asan City, it was 11:30 am. Director Jong-Suk Park was hovering around Gun-Ho's office door.

"What's up?"

"This..."

"An early leave request for the day? What's wrong? Are you ill? Do you need to see a doctor?"

"My parents are here. I gotta go."

"Your parents? Here in Cheonan City?"

"Yes."

"Oh, really? For what occasion?"

"My parents will meet my girlfriend's parents today."

"Really? That's why you look so neat today. You had a new haircut, huh?"

"Haha. Right."

"Where are they going to meet?"

"Seungjiwon restaurant in Baekseok Town."

"Where are your parents right now?"

"They will arrive soon at the Express Bus Terminal. If I leave now, I can arrive there on time."

"Let's go together."

"With you, bro?"

"Yes. Your parents came all the way to Cheonan City. I want to see them."

"You don't have to, bro."

"I still remember your mom's warm and fantastic Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup). Let's go."

"Really... you don't have to do that."

"Just follow me with your car. I will drive before you. Let's meet at the waiting area in the bus terminal."

287 Plant Manager — Director Jong-Suk Park 3 – Part 2

Gun-Ho arrived at the express bus terminal in Sinbu Town, Cheonan City.

There were so many people around the bus terminal, and it took some time to find an available parking spot, so Gun-Ho came a bit late.

When Gun-Ho went to the waiting area in the basement of the bus terminal building, Jong-Suk was already there standing beside the sitting area. An old couple was sitting on the chairs next to Jong-Suk. Gun-Ho went there and greeted them.

"Hi. How are you?"

It seemed that Jong-Suk didn't tell his parents that Gun-Ho would be here. Jong-Suk's mother looked surprised and looked at Jong-Suk.

"Who is this young man?"

"He is the president of the company I am working for. He is Gun-Ho bro."

"Gun-Ho? That Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Yes, ma'am. I am Gun-Ho."

"Oh, my goodness. I can't believe it."

Jong-Suk's mother stood up and grabbed Gun-Ho's hand in delight.

"You grew up very well, son. You look like a gentleman. I can't believe you are Gun-Ho. You look very different from when you were little. Well, you still have the same eyes and nose. Oh, my gosh."

Jong-Suk's mother was a tough woman; well, at least that was how Gun-Ho remembered her. Her nickname between the kids in the town was the tiger lady. But she didn't look so tough anymore. She looked shorter than before, and she

had a lot of wrinkles on her face.

"Aren't you having a hard time because of Jong-Suk?"

"No, no. He is actually helping me a lot at work."

"Are your parents still in Incheon City?"

"Yes, ma'am. My parents are in Guweol Town."

"Are they in good health?"

"Yes, they are. I heard you are meeting Jong-Suk's girlfriend's parents today. Are you excited?"

"Well, I do like her except that she is wearing glasses."

"Here we go again. Stop it, mom!"

It seemed that Jong-Suk heard the same complaints over and over from his mother so far.

"I actually saw her in person. She looked very pretty and very smart. She also seemed to have a very good temper."

"How many kids do you have, Gun-Ho?"

"I am still single, but I have someone I am seeing right now."

Gun-Ho just said that so Jong-Suk's parents didn't think he was available. Otherwise, they would try to introduce someone to him. That was how old people were.

"Your parents must be worried about you. If you have someone, you'd better marry her as soon as possible. You will regret it if you get married late."

"Haha. I will keep that in mind. I guess you will have to leave for the appointment now, so you wouldn't be late. I will leave for my workplace too."

Gun-Ho then took an envelope from the inner pocket of his jacket and quickly slipped it in Jong-Suk's mother's outwear pocket.

"Huh? What is this? No, I can't take this."

"Well, I hope you stay very healthy!"

Gun-Ho quickly walked toward the parking lot after waving his hand to them.

Gun-Ho had his lunch before going back to the office. After lunch, he took a walk around Cheonho Lake nearby Dankook University for a while. When he arrived at his office in Jiksan Town, it was 2 pm. When Gun-Ho's car arrived at the factory gate, the security officer opened the gate and gave a bow to Gun-Ho.

As soon as Gun-Ho entered his office, Secretary Hee-Jeong Park brought a cup of coffee.

"Any call for me during my absence?"

"The manager of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry called and also the president of the Business Promotion Committee in Chungnam Province called too."

"Hmm. I see."

A while later, the research center's chief officer entered Gun-Ho's office. He usually didn't come to the president's office very often.

"Sir, we have completed the hiring process, and we will have an orientation for the new employees today. I'd like to introduce them to you first."

"How many did you select?"

"Seven workers, sir. You told me to hire two more workers than we originally planned, so we hired seven."

"After the building dedication ceremony of the factory in Asan City, we will send those two researchers who had training in the U.S., to Dyeon Korea, okay?"

"Okay, sir. We have enough workers at the research center now."

"Are those seven workers here already?"

"Yes, they are waiting outside the door."

"Oh, really? Let them in then."

The seven new employees gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho as they walked into Gun-Ho's office. They all had a nametag on their chests, and they all looked nervous.

"Let's have a seat at the table over there."

The new workers carefully sat at the table.

"I welcome you all on board. According to the chief officer, he initially planned to hire five people, but there were so many competent and smart applicants, so he ended up hiring two more. Now I see you all in person, and I totally understand how the chief officer felt. You all look smart and hard workers."

Secretary Hee-Jeong Park brought green tea in a paper cup and distributed it to each new employee.

"Our company was previously known as Mulpasaneop. As I joined this company, I changed the name to GH Mobile. So, you are officially the first new employees who GH Mobile hired."

While talking, Gun-Ho looked at the new employees. They all looked like in their 30s, mostly. There were about two people who looked older than Gun-Ho, but the others were younger than him.

"Our chief officer of the research center here studied at a school that's famous worldwide—the Technical University of Munich in Germany. He received his Ph.D. from there and worked at the research center of BMW for a long time. You are the people who will take charge of our research center with our chief officer here for the future of our company. I hope you stay with GH Mobile for a long time."

Gun-Ho then stood up from his seat and made a tour around the new workers and had a handshake with each of them. The workers looked like they were feeling grateful by having a handshake with the president of the company that they would be working for.

"Thank you."

The new workers were about the same age as Gun-Ho. They graduated from top universities, but there was a gap in the social status already between Gun-Ho and them.

Gun-Ho looked at the chief officer of the research center and said,

"We now have a full house at the research center. Why don't you throw a welcoming party to them?"

"Yes, sir."

Once the new workers left the office, Secretary Hee-Jeong Park came in to clean the table.

"Ms. Hee-Jeong Park!"

"Yes, sir?"

As Gun-Ho called her name, Ms. Hee-Jeong Park, who was picking up the empty paper cups, lifted her head and looked at Gun-Ho.

"It seems that we hired good workers for the research center."

"I agree with you, sir."

"Why don't you pick one from them or someone within the company? You don't have to look for your husband somewhere far."

"You are embarrassing me, sir."

Secretary Hee-Jeong Park blushed and left the office.

288 Conversation at Shade House in a country club 1 – Part 1

Professor Jien Wang came to Korea to participate in a symposium. After he completed his schedule, he came straight to GH Mobile in Jiksan Town with Attorney Young-Jin Kim from Kim & Jeong Law Firm. They didn't even stop by a rest area on the way.

"I like this factory. It looks very well built."

After they looked around at the factory yard, they walked up to the second floor where the president's office was located. Gun-Ho was so happy to see them.

"Hey, Jien Wang!"

"Gun-Ho Goo! It's really good to see you, friend."

"Long time no see, Attorney Kim. Have a seat."

After having a handshake, the three men finally sat on chairs.

"So, you are done with the symposium?"

"Yes, I came straight here to see you, Gun-Ho, after the symposium."

"I know Attorney Kim came here once when we had the building dedication ceremony, but this must be your first time here, right, Jien Wang?"

"I took a quick glance of the factory on the way up to your office. I know I came here before, but the factory looks different somehow."

"You haven't been to the production field yet, have you?"

"No, I haven't yet."

"Maybe you can have a tour of the factory first before we leave to play golf."

Gun-Ho made a call to Jong-Suk Park and asked him to come to his office.

Jong-Suk Park soon came to Gun-Ho's office. He was wearing the GH Mobile uniform.

"This is our plant manager."

"Oh, Chang Zhang (factory manager)!"

Jien Wang extended his hand to Jong-Suk for a handshake.

"I think I have seen this person before."

"Probably so, since he is a very good friend of mine. He is like a brother to me. Jong-Suk, please give my two friends here on a tour of our factory."

Jong-Suk took Professor Jien Wang and Attorney Young-Jin Kim to his daily workplace—the production field.

When the workers in the production field saw two men in a business suit coming to the worksite while following their plant manager, they thought Professor Wang and Attorney Kim were the investigators from a buyer company to check their factory. And they got busy cleaning the worksite by organizing incomplete products and moving the defective products somewhere that wasn't so obvious.

After observing the products pouring out of extruding machines and molding machines, Jien Wang nodded his head.

"Gun-Ho Goo is indeed an incredible man."

The machines in the factory were being maintained extremely clean; thanks to My Machine program. The machines were placed in a very well organized way, and the factory overall was neat and clean.

"I can't believe this factory maintains the cleanliness to this level. I haven't seen a factory this clean in China."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim was interpreting for Professor Jien Wang. Whenever Jong-Suk Park explained about the production system, Attorney Kim interpreted it into Chinese for Professor Wang. The production workers, who were paying

attention to the visitors, were wondering as they saw them speaking in English.

"They are speaking in English. They are not the investigators from our customer companies then. Are they Korean Americans?"

"It seems like."

The workers were interested in the visitors to their worksite.

Jien Wang took out his smartphone to take some pictures of the factory when Jong-Suk stopped him.

"Taking a picture is not allowed in our factory. I am sorry about it. If you really need to do so, you need to get permission from President Goo first."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know that."

Professor Jien Wang put his smartphone back to his pocket.

After taking a tour of the production field, they went back to the second floor to Gun-Ho's office.

"How was it?"

"Wow. I couldn't believe what I saw. It was so clean. I think I need to send some of the Chinese factory owners here to learn."

"I am sure Chinese factories are clean enough too."

"I'm serious. I was very impressed. The business owners in China should learn from you."

"Shall we head to the country club now?"

"Sounds good."

Gun-Ho took Jien Wang and Young-Jin Kim to Sangrok Country Club. It was located very close to his GH Mobile factory in Jiksan Town.

"So, this is the country club that is operated by the National Pension Service of Korea, huh?"

When Jien Wang recalled what he heard from Gun-Ho about Sangrok Country Club, Attorney Young-Jin Kim was surprised.

"Jien Wang! You seem to know more about things in Korea than me."

"Nah. Gun-Ho Goo told me the other day."

While Gun-Ho and Young-Jin brought their own golf clubs, Jien Wang had to borrow a full set of golf gear including golf gloves and golf shoes. Gun-Ho paid for everything with a credit card, including a golf cart and golf caddies.

"Gun-Ho Goo, you are spending money again for us."

"That's okay. I'm using my company credit card."

Gun-Ho waved the credit card as he said so.

"This is what I like about a businessman. Many professors are not so cool when it comes to payment for anything."

The golf course was not busy at all since it was a weekday.

Attorney Young-Jin Kim was very good at golfing as expected while Gun-Ho Goo and Jien-Wang made frequent mistakes in hitting the golf ball. They often made over par.

"Let's take a break. It has been a while since the last time I played golf. I feel tired already. Why don't we take a rest at the Shade House over there?"

"Sure."

The Shade House in the forest had a great view of the golf course. The three men had fruit beverages while looking at the view.

"Attorney Kim, are you playing golf like everyday? You can't be this good otherwise."

"Haha. I just started playing golf at an early age when I was in school. I used to play golf with my dad when I was little."

"I see. No wonder why people from a wealthy family usually play golf very

well."

"Aren't you from a wealthy family too, Jien Wang? You studied in the U.S. at Yale University. It must cost a lot to travel from China to the U.S. and study there. I thought you could do so because of your family's stable financial support."

"Not necessarily. My father is a college professor just like me. I could study abroad because the Zhejiang government granted me a scholarship. We shouldn't talk about who has more money in front of Gun-Ho Goo. He is the richest among us. The god of wealth seems to be attached to Gun-Ho only."

Gun-Ho was thinking while having his beverage.

'That's right. I am the man with ShinWangJaeWang fate.'

"I wish Seukang Li is here with us today."

"Yeah. Oh, Seukang Li asked me how you are doing. He said he wants to meet you, Gun-Ho."

"Me? Why?"

"As you know, Seukang Li is in charge of the bureau of cultural affairs and media. His office is hosting a book exhibition in Shanghai, and he said a lot of publishing companies from other countries participated in it, and that helped his work a lot. He heard that you, President Goo, have a publishing company called GH Media. He wants you to come and join him in the book exhibition."

"GH Media usually publishes American or Japanese books after translating into the Korean language. I don't think we have any books we can participate in the book exhibition in Shanghai with."

"What about you publishing Chinese books?"

"President Jeong-Sook Park of GH Media said she doesn't do Chinese books because they are not very popular."

"I see. That makes sense. I was told that they stopped printing out my book after the second edition. Chinese books are not very fun to read, even for me. But I

want to help Seukang Li in some way..."

Gun-Ho recalled the fact that Seukang Li helped GH Parts Company's business by introducing a window manufacturing company to Min-Hyeok Kim. And that increased the company's sales revenue. Gun-Ho wanted to help Seukang Li as well.

"Well, I guess I can still participate in his book exhibition."

"Seukang Li will be very happy if you can just participate."

289 Conversation at Shade House in a country club 1 – Part 2

Another group of people came into the Shade House where Gun-Ho's party was taking a break in. The other team was making so much noise by talking loudly that Gun-Ho felt like the shade house was about to collapse.

"Hahaha. President Kim, I guess you have to buy us a drink today since you made a bogey."

"I haven't been myself today. I am so tired because of that b*tch I met yesterday. It was all her fault."

"Hahaha."

Those people were ill-mannered and totally ignored the fact that they were not alone in the Shade House. Jien Wang and Young-Jin Kim seemed to feel very uncomfortable by those people's presence. One man from that group was talking on the phone and he was extremely loud.

"Hey, Byeong-Tae died today. Are you asking me who Byeong-Tae is? You know that one who graduated from Seoul National University majoring in Economics. Yeah, that's right. That's him."

Gun-Ho couldn't know who Byeong-Tae was, of course, but he could see that which college a person graduate from was following that person until the day he died.

"Let's get out of here."

Gun-Ho, Jien, and Young-Jin walked out of the Shade House. They just couldn't stand the other party.

Jien Wang asked,

"What was that guy talking about on the phone? He was very loud."

"Well, he said someone who studied Economics at Seoul National University passed away."

"What does his college have to do with his death?"

"I am wondering about it too."

"Well, it is called the resemblance theory."

"Resemblance theory?"

"People are trying to find the same quality as them on things or on other people. They then evaluate the other person or the thing, and they ultimately want to feel that they are better than others or his thing is better than the other thing."

"Jien, you are very knowledgeable. You are indeed a professor."

"That is usually caused by a person's unstable and insecure mind. You will see. As long as people have that sort of mentality, we won't be able to be free from overvaluing the importance of graduating from a top university, whether it is in Korea or China."

"Hmm..."

Gun-Ho thought he could understand about half of what Jien Wang just said.

"People talk about someone who graduated from Seoul National University like he is very close to that person, even though that is not true. It could be found in a political campaign as well. Since Korea is a democratic country with numerous elections per year, you probably want to observe it with this theory in mind."

"Like what? Give me some examples."

"If a very good-looking man runs as a congressional candidate, the people who value the appearance greatly with a shallow mind and knowledge will vote for that man. It's the resemblance theory."

"Da*n it, an ugly person can't even run for an election, according to what you just said."

The three men continued to talk as they walked on the golf course.

"You already experienced some benefits from the resemblance theory."

"Me? What benefits?"

"You made a lot of money by purchasing a condo around West Lake in Hangzhou City, where only rich people live in."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim who was listening to the conversation seemed to be surprised.

"Gun-Ho Goo, did you invest in the real estate in China?"

Professor Jien Wang and Gun-Ho Goo continued to talk without responding to Attorney Kim's question.

"I heard the price of the real properties in Gangnam District, Seoul City kept going higher and higher these days. The same theory applies there too. The citizens in Hangzhou City want to live in a wealthy area around West Lake, as the citizens in Seoul want to live in Gangnam. Once they live in the area, they start showing off. They show off that they live in the same area as other wealthy people, implying that they are part of it."

"Wow. I'm just so impressed by your vast knowledge."

"Well, many rich people who accumulated their wealth at an early age know this already. I learned it from reading books. The rich people know this like an instinct and they apply it to their life."

What Jien Wang just said reminded Gun-Ho of Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town. Chairman Lee accumulated his wealth at an early age by multiple transactions of the condos in Gangnam District, Seoul City, specifically Apgujeong Town.

Professor Jien Wang turned his head to look at Gun-Ho, and said,

"Do you know what we call these wealthy people? We call them a sage. A professor at Seoul National University is not a sage. They are just scholars with high pride. A sage is a different kind."

Gun-Ho definitely thought that Chairman Lee was a sage. Gun-Ho nodded his head.

After playing golf, Gun-Ho took Jien Wang and Young-Jin Kim to a restaurant that specialized in Galbi (Korean grilled beef ribs). Gun-Ho selected this restaurant because he knew that Chinese people were usually meat lovers. The three men had Galbi with beer, and then they enjoyed the hot spring bath afterward.

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. Because of a good friend like you, I had a wonderful day; I played golf with my dear friends, had Galbi, and took a hot spring bath. This will be one of the memorable days for me."

Jien Wang grabbed Gun-Ho's hand and shook it vigorously.

"Don't mention it, friend. I always find something I can learn whenever I meet you, Jien Wang. What you tell me helps me a lot with my business. We say that people self-develop within a group of other people. Now I see the meaning of it. I do appreciate it."

Gun-Ho grabbed Jien Wang's hand and shook it too.

Attorney Young-Jin Kim chipped in. He extended his hand to Gun-Ho.

"I thank you too, Gun-Ho. I had a marvelous day because of you."

Attorney Young-Jin Kim grabbed Gun-Ho's hand and shook it hard.

After seeing off Jien Wang and Attorney Young-Jin Kim, Gun-Ho came to his condo in Buldang Town. After taking a shower, Gun-Ho opened his refrigerator. There was dried food and beer. Gun-Ho usually dined out and he didn't really store food in his refrigerator; however, he always had a beer and dried food in it.

A sip of beer after shower tasted great. While having a bottle of beer, Gun-Ho thought of Jong-Suk Park.

"I am wondering if the meeting between his parents and his girlfriend's parents went well."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Jong-Suk Park.

"Jong-Suk? Are you home already?"

"Yeah. I'm home."

"What are you doing?"

"I'm reading a book."

"A book? What's wrong with you? I've never seen you reading a book before."

"I gotta graduate Polytechnics College, don't I?"

"Ha, I guess you are finally growing up since you have a girlfriend. Did your parents go back to their home already?"

"Yes. By the way, bro, why did you put that much money in the envelope for my parents?"

"Don't say that. Your mom is my mom. Moreover, the Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup) your mom gave to me when I was little is priceless."

"Well, still it's too much."

"How was the meeting? I wanted to ask you when I saw you this morning, but I couldn't because I was so preoccupied with the visit of Professor Jien Wang and stuff."

"It went well."

"What did they say?"

"You know what? It turned out that my father and Eun-Sook's father grew up in the same town."

"Eun-Sook? That's your girlfriend's name?"

"Yeah, she is Eun-Sook Bang."

"It's a pretty name. So her parents are from Incheon too, huh?"

"No no. My father is originally from Dangjin City in Chungcheong Province and

so is my mom. They are not from Incheon City."

"Oh, I see. So they just settled in Incheon City after they moved from Dangjin City."

"Since they grew up in the same town, they seemed to enjoy talking with each other, especially by talking about the old days in that town. So, it was good."

"Really? Congratulations man. I guess you will marry soon."

"Eun-Sook's father suggested my parents to move to Cheonan City once we marry."

"Really? Why so?"

"Eun-Sook is the only child and I am the only child in the family, so once we marry, both parents will feel lonely without a child in their home."

"Really? What did your parents say?"

"They were just smiling without saying a word about it, but it seems they are considering it."

"I think it's a good idea. Since your parents' hometown is Dangjin City, it is closer to Cheonan than Incheon. Your parents no longer run a restaurant anyway. They don't have to stay in Incheon, I guess."

"Oh, bro. I bought a condo."

"Really? Which one?"

"It's Purgio Condo next to Dujong Station."

"Really? How much did you pay?"

"It's 32 pyung large. I paid 230 million won."

"Did you buy it with a mortgage?"

"No. I didn't have to. I saved up some money for my entire 7 years of career at a factory. That was about 80 million won. And my parents helped me with 150

million won."

"Really?"

"My parents actually had saved some money for me for all these years, so they wanted to spend it when I get married. So I bought the condo without any debt."

Jong-Suk's parents were not rich but they had run a restaurant for a long time; it seemed they saved up good money for Jong-Suk. Jong-Suk was their only child after all. Because Jong-Suk had no siblings, he considered Gun-Ho like his real brother.

290 Conversation at Shade House in a country club 2 – Part 1

A mail arrived from China. It was an official invitation signed by Seukang Li for the international book exhibition that he was hosting in Shanghai. He sent the invitation for two. In addition to the invitation letter, Seukang Li sent an email to Gun-Ho separately. The email was written in Chinese and Gun-Ho, who had studied in China, had no problem reading it.

To: My friend, Gun-Ho Goo

I met Jien Wang yesterday. He seemed to have a great time in Korea. He said it was because of you. And, he told me that he talked to you about the international book exhibition that I am hosting in Shanghai.

I am not sure about Korea, but here in China, Newspaper Guangdian Zongju manages publication in the Beijing area, and Guangbo Yingshi Ju which is the bureau of cultural affairs and media where I work manages publication in the Shanghai area.

Since I am the one who is in charge of this bureau in Shanghai, I am hoping to have as many publishing companies participate in the book exhibition, but I am not sure how many publishing companies will actually join us. I was told that you have a publishing company—

GH Media. If GH Media's president and the owner could come to join our book exhibition, I would greatly appreciate it.

I feel like I always ask you for a favor without being of much help to you and I am sorry about it. If you could make it to my book exhibition, I would owe you big time.

From: Seukang Li from Shanghai

After reading the email from Seukang Li, Gun-Ho made a phone call to President Jeong-Sook Shin in GH Media.

"Yes, sir. This is Jeong-Sook Shin."

"President Shin, I've received the first and the second book of the cartoon series that you sent to me earlier."

"We have the third and fourth books that are ready, and we sent those to you already. They will arrive at your office by tomorrow."

"Are they selling well?"

"We are already printing out the third editions of the first and second books of world history cartoon series. These books are an already-proved bestseller by Amazon.com. I knew it will be successful, but they are actually selling more than I expected."

"That's good to hear."

"The workers here were worried about it when we put them on the bookstores for the first time. Now they are very satisfied with the sales performance."

"Really? That's really nice. Umm, have you heard of an international book exhibition held in Shanghai, China?"

"Yes, I have. I know some of the publishing companies which are selling Korean books that already applied to participate in the book exhibition."

"Can't we participate in it?"

"No, sir. We are selling Japanese or American books after translating it into the Korean language. So, we don't really have our own books to promote there."

"What if we go there and import Chinese books?"

"Our market is Korea, and Chinese books are not so popular in Korea."

"I've received two invitations for that book exhibition. Would you like to go there with me?"

"Well, I don't know. I think we will probably just waste time and money by traveling to China."

"To be honest with you, the person who is hosting the book exhibition in Shanghai is my friend. He is Chinese, of course."

"Oh, really?"

"He is the director of the bureau of cultural affairs, radio broadcasting, film, television, media, and arts of Shanghai. And that bureau is hosting the international book exhibition. He sent me the invitation with an email saying I have to be there."

"Well, you should go there then, sir."

"I won't be very helpful to him if I go there by myself. I don't know much about the book publishing business. He sent me two invitations, so I was wondering if you would go there with you, President Shin."

"Well... Okay. I will go with you, sir. But the travel expenses..."

"Don't worry about the expenses for the trip. I can have GH Mobile pay for our travel expenses or I can personally bear the entire cost."

Gun-Ho had been receiving his monthly salaries from three separate companies, and he hadn't really spent much so far. Those salaries were just being accumulated in his personal bank account.

"I am in then. As a matter of fact, everyone in the publishing business wishes to participate in an international book exhibition."

"We don't have to make a contract for a Chinese book if we don't meet any good one. I just want to be there for my friend."

"Understood, sir."

"I will let you know once the trip itinerary is confirmed."

"Okay, sir."

After getting off the phone with GH Media's President Shin, Gun-Ho replied to Seukang Li's email.

I guess you might feel a heavy burden on your shoulders for the book exhibition. Since I have a publishing company, I will participate in the exhibition with the publishing company's president. I am gladly taking this opportunity to see my dear friend.

Wishing our forever friendship, Gun-Ho Goo from Korea

Gun-Ho was stretching himself in his office after sending out the email reply to Seukang Li when Director Dong-Chan Lee entered the office. He was with two young men.

"Sir, these are the new hires of Dyeon Korea."

"Oh, really? Please have a seat."

Director Kim and the new employees sat on a chair.

Director Kim handed over their resumes to Gun-Ho.

Both of the new employees graduated from Seoul National University and they had some experience abroad either as an exchange student or for a voluntary work. They were about 30 years old, which made them at least five years younger than Gun-Ho.

Gun-Ho looked at Director Kim and said,

"What are their job positions?"

"One person will do import and export work, and the other will do sales."

"For the accounting and general affairs positions, you said you wanted to take a few employees from the current GH Mobile's employees, right?"

"That's right, sir. We will need people with work experience for the accounting and general affairs positions, so I'm planning to take a team leader or assistant manager in those departments in GH Mobile. And we will hire two more employees for each department."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho then looked at the new hires and said,

"Welcome aboard. You will feel a bit uncomfortable at the beginning of your work since the Dyeon Korea's building is not yet completed."

"That's okay, sir."

The two men responded simultaneously.

"Are you two from this area?"

"Yes, our parents are in Asan City."

Gun-Ho said,

"I am so happy to have decent new employees in Dyeon Korea. You will learn a lot from Director Kim here. If you work hard, you will have an opportunity to promote within the company as well. Since you start working with us even before the company's building is completed, you are one of our very first employees. I look forward to working with you two."

Gun-Ho had a handshake with each of the new employees and tapped their backs.

The new hires gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho before leaving the office.

While having a cup of tea in his office, Gun-Ho thought about the two young men who just joined Dyeon Korea. They looked young and innocent. He then touched his own face.

"I just turned 36 years old. If those two young men saw me on the street, would they consider me like an older brother? Or an uncle? Do I look already that old?"

Gun-Ho looked at himself in the mirror.

"I am indeed getting old. I came this far without a break and without realizing that I am aging. Mori Aikko is only 21 years old. Is she with me because she really likes me? Or because of my money?"

As Gun-Ho suddenly became self-conscious about his aged appearance, he

decided to get a skin care, and he headed to downtown in Cheonan City.

291 Conversation at Shade House in a country club 2 – Part 2

Gun-Ho was supposed to go back to work after having a skincare and eating his lunch, but he didn't feel like going to work that afternoon.

"I have money, but I'm not sure if I am going in the right direction with my life. My life is all about the company. I have to figure out all sorts of problems that occurred within the company and I have to make a judgment and decision on issues raised in the company. That's all I do every day. I am not certain whether dedicating all my time and energy to running the company is the life I want to live in."

Gun-Ho was wondering who other business owners consult these kinds of issues, probably none. Gun-Ho then thought of Master Park from Gangnam, who predicted five years ago that Gun-Ho would become vastly rich.

"Maybe I should talk to him. He had been released from the hospital already and I heard he went back to Goesan Town. Goesan Town is far from Seoul City, but it only takes about an hour if I leave from Cheonan City."

Gun-Ho turned his car in the direction toward Geosan Town, instead of his office. He didn't forget to pick up some gifts on the way to his home; he bought a gift set of ginseng extract.

Once he arrived in Goesan Town, he asked the locals he encountered on the way where he could find Cheonghakjeongsa which was the name of Master Park's temple-like home.

Gun-Ho was told that Cheonghakjeongsa was built by Master Park, and he seemed to have done a very good job. It was not a large building. It had a Korean traditional roof which made it look very elegant. Its interior was quite small. It looked way smaller than Gun-Ho's office. Behind Cheonghakjeongsa, there was an additional small house made of wood. It was probably the house where Master Park was actually living in.

At the entrance of Cheonghakjeongsa, there was a large stone where people left their shoes before entering inside. On the day Gun-Ho visited Cheonghakjeongsa, there were several shoes on that stone. It seemed that Master Park had other visitors that day. Gun-Ho could take a peek at the inside of Cheonghakjeongsa through a small gap between the door and the wall. Master Park was doing what he had been doing when he was in Gangnam; he was telling the visitors about their fates and future. They were sitting at a floor table on a floor cushion.

"Ha. He is still running the same business even here."

When Gun-Ho looked around the yard, there were two vehicles parked, probably the visitors' cars. Gun-Ho waited there for about 30 minutes.

"What takes him so long? It's just a fortune-telling, is it?"

When Gun-Ho was checking the time by looking at his watch, the visitors walked out of the room. Gun-Ho waited until those guests left the room completely before he finally entered the room.

"Hello, sir."

"Oh, President Goo? I've noticed that a magpie sang this morning. I guess the magpie was telling me that I will have an important visitor today."

Gun-Ho quietly placed the gift—KGC ginseng extract on the floor next to the table.

"Oh, you brought me a precious gift."

"I've wanted to visit you in Goesan Town. The air is very clean and fresh here."

"Please have a seat."

Gun-Ho sat on a floor cushion.

"You are wondering about something, right? People encounter some questions they can't find the answer to while they are living their lives. That's natural. I forgot your birth year, date, and time. Would you give me those information again?"

Gun-Ho told him what he asked.

Master Park took his time to figure out Gun-Ho's fate according to his birth year, date, and time. He made some notes on paper then said while putting the paper away,

"Well, I don't even have to go deep. You have the fate of ShinWangJaeWang! You will enjoy your wealthy life."

"I am 36 years old already and I am still single."

"Don't worry about it. You will have several wives. That's your fate."

"How can I possibly have several wives? A person can legally have one spouse at a time."

"These days, we call one of those women as your spouse, and for the other women, we call them your lovers. You will have many lovers, and they will be your secret lovers."

"I did make good money, that's true, but I don't even have one woman I am seeing right now."

Master Park craned his neck toward Gun-Ho's face and asked,

"Are you sure? Are you being truthful here? Don't you even have someone you haven't told anyone yet?"

Gun-Ho couldn't respond right away because Mori Aikko just crossed his mind.

"See? I take that as you do have someone already. You will have another one, and you will have your wife too."

"What am I going to do with all those women?"

Master Park smiled.

"That's your fate. Enjoy it. You certainly have a better life than mine. In case you haven't noticed, I am staying in the countryside by myself."

"Well... umm..."

"Your fate is not just about making a lot of money, but it applies to your love life too. You will be rich in the sense that you will have a lot of women in your life."

"I see."

"Have you read a book called The Cloud Dream of the Nine?"

"Are you talking about the Korean novel written by Mangjung Gim during the Joseon Dynasty?"

"That's right. You probably learned it in high school. It's a frequent test topic in school as well. I see that you know the book and even its author, but have you read it?"

"No, I haven't"

"If you read the book, you will see the main character. His name is So-Yoo Yang. Do you know how many women including his wife and other lovers whom he had?"

"I don't know."

"In the novel, he had two wives and six lovers. He lived with all of them. He was very rich and he was a top-ranked official in the government."

"Ha. Really?"

"In his later years of life, he realized the transience of life and eventually entered into Buddhism, and he went to heaven after his death. His life was a dream life of the scholars in that era."

"Haha. Are you serious?"

"He had two wives and six lovers. He had a wealthy life, and he went to heaven after he died. Isn't it a good life? It's a very opposite life from mine."

"What about your life? Your life doesn't look bad at all."

"I don't have a wife and I don't have much money. And I guess I will fall into hell after I die."

"Haha. Why are you saying that? You are joking, right?"

"Well, I don't even have to search deep with your fate. You won't have as many lovers as the main character in The Cloud Dream of the Nine, but you will have a wife, one lover in Japan and another one in China. That's your destiny."

"Haha. I'm not sure if that would become true, but I feel good to hear it."

Gun-Ho walked out of Cheonghakjeongsa after leaving substantial fees behind.

Master Park told Gun-Ho before he left,

"If you see Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town when you go to Seoul City, please say hi for me. He is a very good friend than he looks."

292 Top Star—Seol-Bing 1 – Part 1

President Jang-Hwan Song who was the co-president of GH Mobile came to Gun-Ho's office.

"We developed two products at our research center out of five orders that S Group placed. We are currently producing sample products. We will manufacture 5,000 for each product and send it to our logistics team today."

"Good work."

"I was impressed by the ability of our new chief officer of the research center. I was told that BMW's research center didn't want to let him go, and I now totally understand why. He is a bit sensitive but other than that, he is the best research chief officer I've ever seen."

"Is he that sensitive?"

"It's a very common disposition among high-level engineers. That sensitivity enables them to produce accurate and precise products."

"I guess they will soon start developing the other three products, too."

"I think we need help from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo who returned to Japan for one of the products, which S Group's factory in Changweon location requested. The order quantity for that product is the highest."

"Do you think we are not capable of developing it on our own?"

"We need to carve a metal for it, and that requires a person to have extensive experience. Even though the researchers in our research center have the perfect theory to develop the product, we don't have that sort of proficiency. We can still develop the product; however, it will take a long time. Given the time and other resources that are required in developing a particular product, it would save a lot of cost and labor if we get help from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo."

"Hmm, I see what you mean."

"I will go to Japan and talk to Mr. Sakata Ikuzo myself. I will bring the design drawing to him."

"Are you planning to go by yourself?"

"Well, I prefer to bring one more person with me, but that will cost us..."

"The trip could give a very good experience. Why don't you go with the research chief officer? I understand that the chief officer is more on the theoretical side while Mr. Sakata Ikuzo has extensive hands-on skills, but I think our chief officer will learn a lot from this trip."

"Okay. I will do that."

"Do you have Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's contact information?"

"Director Jong-Suk Park had Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's business card, and it had his email address. I already sent an email to him, and he replied to us right away. He said that he is willing to help us any time."

"Really? I suppose you know the Japanese language."

"Not fluently, but I can speak a little bit. When I was in my mid-40s, I had worked in Japan for three years as a branch manager."

"Oh, I see."

Gun-Ho thought for a second to go to Japan with them, so he could see Mori Aikko, but he then thought it was not a good idea. He didn't want to give any impression to President Song or the research chief officer that he was having too much fun traveling around.

Instead, Gun-Ho decided to go to China. Gun-Ho announced his trip to China when he had a meeting with the executives.

"I will have to go to Shanghai. Currently, President Song and our research chief officer are on a trip to Japan, so we have several absences. I hope you all stay put at your position until we come back."

The internal auditor who was sitting next to Gun-Ho asked,

"May I ask what the occasion of your trip to Shanghai is, sir?"

"Oh, as you all know I have several companies that I am running. I will have to participate in an international book exhibition in Shanghai for the GH Media matter. So I am going to China with GH Media's president."

"Oh, I see. Hope you have a safe trip, sir."

The executive officers were careful in choosing their words when they addressed Gun-Ho to show their respect even though Gun-Ho was a lot younger than them. It didn't start off as such in the beginning, but they gradually found themselves doing so since they were working for the company that Gun-Ho owned after all.

Gun-Ho Goo and President Jeong-Sook Shin arrived at Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport, and they went to Hilton Hotel that was in the vicinity of the airport. Gun-Ho and President Shin had more than 10 years of an age gap, so they didn't appear to be a married couple to the people who didn't know them. Hilton Hotel at that location was a preferred hotel among Koreans since it was close to the airport and also close to the Korean town.

"It's kind of early for lunch. Why don't you take a break in your room and come to the lobby for lunch later?"

President Song responded while rubbing her belly.

"Sir, I think I will have to skip lunch today. I think I have an upset stomach since I had the in-flight meal. I think I'd better just take a rest at the room for the rest of the day."

"I can get you medicine."

"I brought some medicine with me. Thank you, sir."

"Hmm. Really? Don't worry about me. Just take a rest and get better."

After President Shin left for her room, Gun-Ho sat on a sofa in the hotel lobby. He then made a call to Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Hey, it's me. I just arrived in Shanghai."

"You did? I can come to Shanghai tomorrow. I am in Tsingtao right now at one of our customer companies."

"Oh, really? Sure. You don't have to rush to come here. I can see you tomorrow."

"Tomorrow, let's go to the art exhibition."

"Art exhibition?"

"Yeah. Remember that my father-in-law is a painter? He is having his art exhibition somewhere around People's Park in Shanghai. If you have time, I want to go there with you."

"Sounds great. Let's go."

After getting off the phone with Min-Hyeok, Gun-Ho called Seukang Li.

"Director Li? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo."

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo. Are you in Shanghai right now?"

"Yeah, I just arrived. I am at Hilton Hotel near Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport. Tomorrow is the opening ceremony for your book exhibition, right? I will be there on time."

"Hey, if you haven't had your lunch yet, why don't you come and join me for lunch? There is a Korean restaurant that specializes in ginseng chicken soup. The owner is Korean. It is a very popular restaurant in this area. If you are with GH Media's president, bring her with you."

"She is actually in her room taking a rest. She is having a minor stomach ache."

"Oh, I guess her body is adjusting to a different environment. Well, why don't you come by yourself then?"

Gun-Ho took a taxi and headed to City Hall. In China, they didn't call it City Hall, but they called it People's Government for the City.

Gun-Ho went straight to the bureau director's office. A female worker asked Gun-Ho who he was, and Gun-Ho told her that he was President Gun-Ho Goo

from Korea. He spoke in Chinese, of course. The worker let Gun-Ho in right away. Gun-Ho entered the office after knocking on the door. Seukang Li was talking with his guests in the office. He stood up and waved his hand when he saw Gun-Ho entering the office.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Seukang Li!"

"Have a seat, my friend."

"I can come later. It seems you have guests here."

There were a man and a woman sitting on a sofa. The female looked sophisticated, and she was wearing dark sunglasses. She looked arrogant, Gun-Ho thought. She didn't wear the sunglasses when Gun-Ho came into the office, but when he entered the office, she picked up her sunglasses and wore them.

The man was skinny, and he stood up and greeted Gun-Ho.

"President Gun-Ho Goo?"

Gun-Ho was surprised when he heard the man speak in Korean. When Gun-Ho looked at the man closely, he realized that he knew the man. He was the manager of BM Entertainment Management Company that he met before. The BM Entertainment manager gave a bow to Gun-Ho respectfully.

"It's really good to see you again, sir."

"Oh, you are the person in the entertainment field."

Gun-Ho extended his hand for a handshake, but he wasn't really thrilled to see him here again.

Director Li asked all of them to have a seat.

"Well, why don't we all have a seat? I guess everyone here except me is Korean."

293 Top Star—Seol-Bing 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho looked at another man who was sitting next to the BM Entertainment manager while sitting on a sofa. The man had a sturdy build, and he looked like he was in his late 50s. He was exuding some sort of charisma. He could be a celebrity, or he could be a leader of a gang. Gun-Ho couldn't tell the woman's age though since she was wearing sunglasses.

Seukang Li said,

"Why don't you introduce yourselves to each other."

The entertainment company's manager smiled and introduced the man sitting next to him.

"This is the president of BM Entertainment."

"Oh, really?"

Gun-Ho said without showing any interest. Gun-Ho who was running a manufacturing company was not really interested in the entertainment field. The president person then said with his thick voice.

"I am Hyeon-Man Yee."

His name sounded familiar. Gun-Ho heard that name before. He looked at the man again closely. He was actually the famous person who appeared on TV sometimes. He had a famous girl group and a very popular boy group in his entertainment management company.

Hyeon-Man Yee gave his business card to Gun-Ho.

"I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

Gun-Ho handed his business card to Hyeon-Man as well. Hyeon-man looked at Gun-Ho's business card carefully. Gun-Ho introduced himself to him with more details.

"I am running a manufacturing company in a small city. We are manufacturing automobile parts."

The entertainment manager smiled and added,

"President Goo is the one who acquired RiverStar Building in Sinsa Town, Gangnam."

"Oh, really? My friend has his office in that building on the seventh floor. He is running an entertainment management company there."

"We changed the name of the building to GH Building."

"Why don't you introduce the lady to him too?"

Seukang Li indicated the female who was wearing sunglasses.

"This is the actress—Seol-Bing."

As Hyeon-Man introduced her, the lady took off her sunglasses and smiled at Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was surprised by her beautiful face. Seol-Bing was a member of a girl group, and she was acting as well. She was cast as a leading character of a very popular TV series recently. Gun-Ho stuttered a bit when he talked to the female celebrity.

"Umm... I... I am very happy to meet a famous star here."

When he gave his business card to her, she took it with a broad smile.

The manager of BM Entertainment said with a smile,

"President Goo is the person I talked to you about. He was the one I asked a favor the other day because I knew he was friends with Director Li."

"Oh, I see."

As the manager explained further, Hyeon-Man took out Gun-Ho's business card from his pocket and looked at it again. Gun-Ho was listed as the president of four companies. Hyeon-Man slowly said,

"We came here to get permission for our performance in Shanghai Sports

Complex. Even though I came here in person and asked for it, Director Li refused to issue the permit. I brought Seol-Bing with me hoping Director Li recognizes her and changes his mind."

The BM manager slowly spoke to Director Li in his humble Chinese.

"Our president came all the way from Seoul. Would you reconsider your decision? We have already talked to TV stations for the performance."

"The decision has been already made. I can't just change it. Please leave. There is nothing much I can do about it now."

"You are the person who is in charge of the media and press. Please reconsider it."

Seol-Bing chipped in with her small voice.

The TV series that Seol-Bing was in had been broadcasted throughout China. If she could have a performance at the Shanghai Sports Center, more people would see her on TV and recognize her talents. That would make her even more famous in Korea, Seol-Bing thought.

Seukang Li shook his head from side to side with his mouth firmly shut. Silence filled the air for a while.

The BM manager talked to Gun-Ho this time.

"Sir, please help us. We brought this beautiful actress here, but it doesn't seem to be helpful. I don't know what else I could do to make it work."

As the BM manager asked Gun-Ho's help, Hyeon-Man Yee and Seol-Bing looked at Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho was baffled. He came to Seukang Li's office to have ginseng chicken soup for his lunch with him. But the situation was going in a weird direction.

Gun-Ho finally opened his mouth and spoke in Chinese.

"Director Li, why don't you give them the performance permit? Maybe we can find a way to promote your book exhibition with their performance at the sports complex."

"How could that be possible? The performance dates and the exhibition dates are different."

"I believe these people have already started preparing their performance pamphlet. Maybe you can distribute it to your book exhibition. That way, more people will come to the book exhibition."

"Hmm. The book exhibition starts tomorrow. I don't think we have enough time to prepare pamphlets."

Hyeon-Man Yee and Seol-Bing seemed to be wondering what Gun-Ho and Director Li were talking about since they couldn't understand Chinese. The BM manager, on the other hand, seemed to understand the conversation. He sometimes nodded his head.

Gun-Ho asked the BM manager,

"Do you already have your performance pamphlet?"

"The pamphlet is almost done. Once we get the permit, we were going to finish it by putting the exact performance date on it."

"If you get the exact date now, can you complete the pamphlet and make them ready to be placed at the international book exhibition venue tomorrow?"

"Let me make a quick phone call to make sure."

The BM manager called somewhere and came back with a gloomy face.

"They said they would need at least three days to make them ready to be used."

Gun-Ho thought for a second with his arms crossed before saying,

"Let's advertise on TV and the Internet that the pamphlet will be distributed after three days at the book exhibition. If people come to the book exhibition and ask for the pamphlet, we can give them a ticket instead, so they can exchange it after three days with the pamphlet."

"Hmm."

Seukang Li was thinking and Gun-Ho was pressing him.

"If the performance permit was declined in order to protect the Chinese entertainment business and not because it would cause some traffic problems, then maybe you can use it to promote the Chinese entertainment business by letting the Chinese celebrities participate in their performance."

"Hmm."

Seukang Li thought of it for quite a while before lifting his head and saying,

"Okay. I will issue the permit. But there are three conditions."

"I'm listening."

"First, Chinese celebrities have to participate in the performance, and they will comprise one-third of the entire participating celebrities."

The BM manager was interpreting what Seukang Li said for Hyeon-Man Yee, and Hyeon-Man Yee was nodding his head.

"Second, the pamphlet will be distributed at the book exhibition free of charge. And since the pamphlet will be ready after three days, they will have to distribute a ticket to exchange with the pamphlet to people who come to the book exhibition in the earlier days."

Hyeon-Man Yee nodded his head as he heard the second condition.

"Third, put the wording on the pamphlet that the performance is sponsored by the bureau of cultural affairs and radio broadcasting, film, and television of Shanghai."

Hyeon-Man Yee nodded his head again to the third condition.

Seukang Li then called for a staff and asked her to make a word document with what he just said.

A female staff came into the office and gave the people in the office a glass of water.

Hyeon-Man Yee extended his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake and said,

"Thank you for helping us."

"It's my pleasure."

"I will come to visit you at your building in Sinsa Town."

"I usually don't stay in Sinsa Town. I've recently invested 20 million dollars into a joint venture with Lymondell Dyeon, and we are currently building a factory in Asan City for it right now. So I usually stay there and come to Seoul from time to time."

"Oh, really? Then please let me know when you come to Seoul."

BM Entertainment's manager stood up and gave a 90-degree bow to Gun-Ho.

"Thank you, sir."

The individuals who were dreaming to be a celebrity wanted to be picked by a manager in an entertainment management company, so the manager in the entertainment company was not someone who those individuals could talk to easily. And that manager was giving a deep bow to Gun-Ho.

The staff came back to the office with the word document that listed three conditions that Seukang Li suggested. It was an agreement written in Chinese. Seukang Li and Hyeon-Man Yee signed the agreement.

Seukang Li called for the staff again.

"Please bring me BM Entertainment's performance application and the permit."

When the staff brought the said document, Seukang Li signed it.

Hyeon-Man Yee said to Director Li,

"Please allow me to treat you lunch or dinner."

"I'm sorry. I already have pre-engagement."

"President Goo, would you join us for lunch?"

"I have pre-engagement as well."

"Oh, you both are busy today. Well, please give me an opportunity to treat you someday."

Hyeon-Man Yee then extended his hand to Gun-Ho again for a handshake. Seol-Bing who looked arrogant with sunglasses on also offered her hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake with a smile. Gun-Ho held Seol-Bing's hand; he thought her hand was very warm.

"Thank you."

As Seol-Bing expressed her appreciation, Gun-Ho said while still holding her hand,

"Don't mention it. I am honored to meet a famous celebrity like you, ma'am."

294 Top Star—Seol-Bing 2 – Part 1

The opening ceremony of the international book exhibition in Shanghai would be held at 10 o'clock in the morning.

Gun-Ho and President Jeong-Sook Shin walked out of Hilton Hotel and took a taxi heading to Nanjing Lu where the book exhibition would be held. The opening ceremony was to be held in the exhibition hall. When they arrived at their destination, Gun-Ho could see the banner on the platform saying 'Shanghai International Book Exhibition'.

Gun-Ho wrote his name on the guestbook in Korean before entering the exhibition; he wrote it as 'the owner of GH Media in Korea—Gun-Ho Goo'. When the female staff at the registration desk saw Gun-Ho's name on the guestbook, they laughed while looking at each other. Everyone wrote their names in Chinese, so maybe Gun-Ho's name in Korean seemed interesting and fun to look at.

The opening ceremony started with Shanghai City's deputy mayor's congratulatory message. After the deputy mayor delivered the message, people applauded. Seukang Li was sitting on a chair at the platform. Gun-Ho was sitting in an area where all other participants were found.

Gun-Ho and President Jeong-Sook Shin slowly walked around the exhibition; they were wearing a flower on their chest, which were given by the staff. The book exhibition was carrying all types of books from children's story books to cryptic philosophy books.

"Gun-Ho Goo."

Someone called Gun-Ho's name and Gun-Ho turned around. It was Seukang Li.

"Hey, I've been looking for you."

Gun-Ho introduced Seukang Li to President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"This is the director of the Shanghai's Bureau of cultural affairs, radio

broadcasting, film, television, media, and arts."

President Jeong-Sook Shin extended her hand to Seukang Li for a handshake with a smile.

"Oh, you must be President Jeong-Sook Shin from GH Media. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"How did you know her name?"

Gun-Ho asked,

"I just saw it on the guestbook."

Seukang Li introduced other Chinese publishing companies' business owners to President Jeong-Sook Shin. China had a very stringent policy in approving the publishing business license, so most of the publishing companies in China were large companies. That contrasted with Korea's environment where there were many small publishing companies with only one or two employees. President Shin received tens of business cards from the Chinese business owners of publishing companies.

Seukang Li said to Gun-Ho in a low voice,

"Thank you, Gun-Ho. I told the publishing companies' owners that GH Media is a very popular publishing company in Korea. That's why they are pouring their business cards into President Shin. They want to make a connection with President Shin hoping that they can publish their book in the Korean market."

"I see."

"Guess what I told them."

"What did you tell them?"

"I told that the owner of that famous GH Media publishing company is my best friend."

"Haha. You didn't lie to them."

"Thank you so much, Gun-Ho. You and President Shin's presence means a lot to me and to this book exhibition."

"You're very welcome, Seukang Li. You must be very busy. You don't have to stay with us. I will look more around the exhibition with President Shin before we leave."

As Gun-Ho looked at the books displayed at the exhibition, he asked President Shin.

"There are tons of books here. Are you sure there is not even a single book you want to publish in Korea?"

"Well, there are several history books that are intriguing to me."

Gun-Ho then said,

"If you think we can sell even only their first edition, let's make a contract. If necessary, I will invest more funds in GH Media to give support."

"That won't be necessary, sir. GH Media has enough funds to handle those contracts now. I will make a contract for three history books then."

"When you do that, please tell them that Director Seukang Li of the Bureau of cultural affairs and media recommended those books to you and that that's why you decided to publish them in Korea."

"Haha. Understood, sir."

President Jeong-Sook Shin made a contract right away with the corresponding publishing company's staff, and she didn't forget to tell them that Seukang Li recommended the books.

"I am signing the contract because Shanghai City's Director Seukang Li strongly recommended it. I didn't even read the books yet."

"Oh, Shi Ma (Is it)?"

President Shin gave them a small amount of deposit as she signed the book contract and promised them to wire-transfer the remaining balance once she

returned to Korea. Since President Shin couldn't speak Chinese, Gun-Ho interpreted for her during the contract signing. President Shin smiled and said,

"Hahaha. I feel like I am the owner of the business, and you are my employee since you are interpreting for me during my contract signing."

"Haha." Gun-Ho laughed.

Gun-Ho and President Shin were having a beverage while sitting on a chair when Min-Hyeok arrived at the book exhibition.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok!"

"I am sorry I am late."

"You have already met GH Media's President Jeong-Sook Shin, right?"

"Of course, I have. How are you, President Shin?"

As Min-Hyeok said hi to President Shin, President Shin gave him a slight nod of greeting with a smile.

"President Shin, you haven't been to our GH factory in China, have you?"

"No, I haven't."

"Why don't you visit us then? We are located in Suzhou City."

"Sure. I will."

"Oh, how did your visit to Qingdao City go?"

"It went well. I went there because of a product claim we received."

"A product claim?"

"Yes. One of our customer companies made a product claim. They said they received defective products from us, 10,000 of them. I was terrified, so I immediately visited their site to verify the defective products myself."

"Really? How is that possible? I can't believe that our factory manufactured

10,000 defective products. Our GH Mobile's former plant manager is there working in the factory with an advisory position. He wouldn't have let anything like that happen under his supervision."

"Right. I went there and confirmed that those defective products were not ours. Those products look exactly the same as ours, but I could tell that those are not ours by looking at the product identification mark."

"What a relief."

"The president of that customer company apologized to me, and he promised to increase the number of products they will order from us after returning all those defective products."

"That's very good."

"That's why I came late today. I came straight from the customer company."

"Really? Oh, I'm sorry, President Shin. We didn't forget your presence here with us. We didn't mean to exclude you from our conversation."

"No, no. Please don't mind me. It seems like you have a very important business to attend to."

"Min-Hyeok, you haven't looked around the book exhibition yet, right? Why don't you make a quick tour of the exhibition? We will be waiting for you here."

"Well... I'm not very interested in the book exhibition. I don't need to see it. Let's just go."

"But since you are here, why don't you just look at them quickly? It's a bit early for lunch anyway so we still have time."

"Nah. Maybe later. Let's just go out for lunch."

"Where is your father-in-law's art exhibition being held?"

"It's not far from here at all. It's around People's Park. I believe we can walk from here."

Gun-Ho Goo, Min-Hyeok Kim, and Jeong-Sook Shin, the three people went to the art exhibition. Since it was still morning, there were not many people.

At the entrance of the art exhibition, there was a banner saying 'Mr. Ding Feng's Landscapes Art Exhibition.'

When the three people entered the exhibition, the person who was sitting at the entrance stood up quickly. He might be wondering who these people were since Gun-Ho's party looked different from Chinese people. They dressed a bit more sophisticated and looked wealthy.

295 Top Star—Seol-Bing 2 – Part 2

Min-Hyeok's father-in-law was a good painter. His paintings were more beautiful and skillfully done than Gun-Ho had expected. His paintings were traditional landscapes painting with mountains, clouds, lake, and a small boat.

"Hey, Min-Hyeok. Your father-in-law is a real artist."

"I was told that he has been painting his entire life. So I'm not surprised."

President Shin, who had profound knowledge in paintings, nodded her head from time to time while looking at the paintings displayed in the exhibition.

"I like them."

There were not many paintings displayed. There were about 20 of them. Gun-Ho felt the pressure that he should buy at least one painting since he was there in person. He asked the staff there,

"Are these paintings for sale as well?"

"Yes, they are."

"How much is the painting over there with a mountain and a lake? The sixth one from the left."

"Do you like that one?"

The staff gave a broad smile and showed Gun-Ho the price of the painting from the price list. The price list showed the name, size, and price of each painting.

The name of the painting that Gun-Ho picked was Drunken in the Mountains. It cost 3,000 Yuan (about 550,000 Korean won).

Min-Hyeok made a comment while looking at the painting that Gun-Ho was about to buy.

"Drunken in the Mountains? So the painting is about a hermit who is living in a

mountain and who happens to be drunk. I can't really see the hermit in the painting though. It's too small. Moreover, the mountain looks rough."

When Gun-Ho filled in the purchasing application with his name and address, the staff's eyes widened.

"Oh, you are Korean? I thought you were from Taiwan since your Chinese was so good."

Gun-Ho gave cash to the staff, and the staff put it in the drawer of the desk while smiling.

"The painting will be available to pick up or be mailed after the art exhibition is over."

"Can you get rid of the picture mounting and mail me only the painting to the address shown in my purchasing application?"

While giving the staff an instruction to mail the painting, Gun-Ho handed an additional 200 Yuan to the staff.

"Please send me by EMS."

"Oh. Umm, of course. Thank you, sir."

The staff then walked to the painting which Gun-Ho just purchased and marked the painting's name tag red. It was a notification to other visitors saying that the painting was already sold.

When Gun-Ho was about to walk out of the exhibition, the staff called him urgently.

"Sir, just a moment, please."

"I'm sorry?"

"Why don't you take a picture with the painter since you purchased one of his paintings? You can take a picture with him in front of the painting that you just bought."

"Oh, really?"

"Mr. Painter is on the third floor right now. He will come down soon."

"Hmm. It's interesting that they allow the buyer to take a picture with the painter in front of the painting he or she purchased."

The staff made a call to the third floor, and after a while, the artist, who was Min-Hyeok's father-in-law, showed up. He looked like he was in his 60s. He had his grey hair pulled back and tied to make a ponytail, and he had a beard. He did look like an artist.

"Sir, this gentleman purchased one of the paintings."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok's father-in-law greeted each other.

When the painter noticed his son-in-law was standing there, he said,

"Oh, you came too."

"Father, the buyer is actually a friend of mine."

"Oh, really? Are you from Korea?"

"Yes, I am, sir."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok's father-in-law then took a picture in front of the no.6 painting.

President Shin suddenly approached Min-Hyeok's father-in-law and said,

"Hello, sir. I came with this gentleman from Korea. I really like your paintings, sir."

"Thank you."

"I am in the publishing business in Korea."

President Shin gave her business card to the painter—Mr. Ding Feng—as she introduced herself to him.

When he received President Shin's business card, he looked at the other side of the card since he couldn't read Korean and checked if there was an English version on the back of the business card.

"You probably came here for the international book exhibition."

"Yes. Sir, have you had your painting exhibition in Korea before?"

"No, I haven't had a chance to do so yet. I had it in Japan and Hong Kong though."

"I do love your paintings. Can I have your business card, sir?"

"Of course."

Mr. Ding Feng pulled out his business card from his white pants' pocket and handed it to President Jeong-Sook Shin. He also gave one to Gun-Ho.

Once the three people walked out of the exhibition, they headed to Hongqiao International Airport to take a flight back to Korea.

At the airport, Gun-Ho extended his hand to Min-Hyeok for a handshake, who came along to see Gun-Ho and President Shin off.

"I wanted to visit our factory in Suzhou City, but I guess I had to do that on another day. The building dedication ceremony of the factory in Asan City is around the corner, and I'd better go back quickly."

"No problem. Next time you visit China, let's visit Dandong as well."

"Sounds good."

Min-Hyeok Kim went back to Suzhou City after having a handshake with Gun-Ho and President Jeong-Sook Shin.

While waiting to board at the gate, Gun-Ho asked President Shin,

"Why did you ask to have Mr. Ding Feng's business card at his art exhibition?"

"Oh, I surprisingly like his paintings a lot. So I was thinking maybe I might see him again later."

"Those paintings of actual landscapes are not popular in Korea anymore, aren't they?"

"You are right. Western paintings are more popular these days, and non-figurative paintings are the current trend. But, Mr. Ding Feng's northern school literati paintings are so refreshing to me."

Gun-Ho wanted to ask what northern school literati painting mean, and then he decided not to ask. He didn't want President Shin to think he was so ignorant of arts that he didn't even have the basic knowledge.

Flight attendants were busy moving around in the flight while serving the passengers.

While Gun-Ho was looking at the female flight attendants who were walking around, the actress—Seol-Bing—crossed his mind, who he met in Director Li's office the other day. He couldn't stop thinking of her after laying down on his seat.

"Seol-Bing? It sounds like some kind of PatBingsu (Korean shaved ice), but her name is easy to call for Chinese people. The Chinese pronunciation of her name is Xue Bing. It is indeed easy to call and easy to remember. It's a good name for an actress."

Gun-Ho thought of Mori Aikko, and he compared her with Seol-Bing. Mori Aikko was a cute type. She was like a cute rabbit while Seol-Bing was more like a grown-up who was beautiful and sophisticated.

Gun-Ho turned his head to look at President Song, and asked her,

"President Song. Do you by any chance know of the actress—Seol-Bing?"

"Did you say Seol-Bing, sir? You must be a fan of Seol-Bing."

President Shin said while smiling.

"No. I 'm not a fan of Seol-Bing. I just met her yesterday when I went to see Director Li. She was in his office."

"Oh, what? Seol-Bing was in Shanghai? I heard that the soap opera that Seol-

Bing is on is gaining popularity more and more in China. She is also a singer and a member of a girl group. She sings very well too."

"Is she famous? I don't really watch TV."

"There is a soap opera called Shade of Desire. It's very popular right now in Korea. She is the main character in that TV series. Seol-Bing is a top star in Korea. You can see her on tons of commercials like soju and cosmetics."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho closed his eyes pretending he fell asleep, but he couldn't sleep because he couldn't stop thinking of Seol-Bing.

296 Top Star—Seol-Bing 3 – Part 1

As soon as Gun-Ho came back to his office in Jiksan Town, the executives followed him to the office to make a report about the matters happened during his absence.

After the executives left Gun-Ho's office once the reporting was completed, President Jang-Hwan Song entered Gun-Ho's office.

"I met with Mr. Sakata Ikuzo in Japan, and he gave this to me to convey it to you."

"Oh, this is a samurai statue made of metal."

"That's right. He asked me to say hi to you, sir."

"I guess he carved this himself. This is very well made."

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo said he made it out of boredom."

"He is indeed the best craftsman in the metal carving field."

"He is an incredible engineer."

"How is he doing? Is he well?"

"Yes. He looked healthy and well."

"Is he living downtown in Tokyo?"

"No, he is living in Motomachi, Yokohama City. He has a small storage attached to his house, where he does carving work with all his equipment. It seems that he is running his own business there like taking an order and sell his carved product."

"So, he is still working at his age. Does he have any apprentice of his own?"

"He said he wants to have an apprentice so he could pass on his skills, but young

people in Japan these days, they don't want to learn that sort of hands-on skills. He complained a lot about it."

"Hmm. That's a shame. His skills are amazing."

"He said it will take about a week for him to make the mold we requested, and he will mail it to us. I think it was a good idea that I went to Japan to talk with him in person, rather than communicating with him through an email. I could understand better his explanation about the product."

"You went there with the research center's chief officer, right? What did he say?"

"He said there is an engineer just like Mr. Sakata Ikuzo in Germany. He is an old man too."

"Really?"

"He also said, Mr. Sakata Ikuzo's product is so pretty even though he wasn't exactly following the design drawing in carving the product."

"I see."

"Mr. Sakata Ikuzo has a calligraphy wall hanging in his storage workshop and it says, 'Issshokenmei' (a person risks his life)."

"He used that wording a lot when he was here working with us. So he has a calligraphy wall hanging with the same wording. That's interesting."

"He said he applies that mindset every time he makes a product."

"Well, he is really an eccentric old man. I hope he makes a great product for us."

When the secretary— Ms. Hee-Jeong Park noticed that President Song would stay in Gun-Ho's office for a while to talk with Gun-Ho, she prepared warm green tea and brought it to the office.

"Please have some tea."

"Thank you."

"How are you doing here, President Song? Are you feeling comfortable working

here?"

"Yes. Everyone here is so kind and I appreciate it. I'm just concerned that since I had been with one company—S Group— for a long time, it might take time for me to make a business with other companies."

"That's okay. Take your time as you need."

"Thank you for understanding. We will have to press harder on growing and stabilizing our company in order to go public."

"Hmm."

"We will have to strengthen the company fundamentals before applying for KOSDAQ registration."

"Are you saying that we need to lower our debt ratio?"

"At first, we need to focus on generating continuous ordinary income. This company incurred a substantial extraordinary loss while paying off the debts caused by Mulpasaneop's failed investment in China. The internal auditor did a great job in doing so. Because the company removed the loss inherited from Mulpasaneop early, it could start generating income starting this year."

"So, are we now qualified to apply for the KOSDAQ registration?"

"No. We will need to generate ordinary income at least for three years, so we could knock the door to the Korea Securities Dealers Association. We still have debt, and once we generate income constantly, we can gradually lower the debt. One of the requirements to apply for the KOSDAQ registration is that the debt ratio must be at least 1.5 times lower than the average debt ratio of the companies in the same industry."

"Hmm."

"What we can do right now is to increase the sales. As you are well aware, networking is critical in increasing the sales in this particular industry in addition to the ability to produce good products. So every employee needs to act as a salesperson to some extent. Of course, we will need technology, skills, and equipment to manufacture quality products. And then, we will need to adopt an

efficient and effective management system."

"Management?"

"Through the effective management, we will need to block any area that is leaking. Especially, we have to focus on the production site."

"We will have to give a special education to Director Jong-Suk Park then."

"I've pointed out several things that he had to correct, but he is doing fine. He works hard. It was an excellent decision to place him in the production site, especially because he is so close to you like a real brother, and everyone knows it. Director Park, who is in a close relationship with the company president, works so hard, and that gives other workers some sort of tacit pressure to work hard along with him. It's not uncommon to see many plant managers or directors spending their time at work without really working. Director Park is not that type at all, so I do highly value him."

"I see."

"The CEO of the Hyundai Motor Group—Mong-Koo Chung once fired a plant manager of his manufacturing factory during his visit there, when he saw the plant manager not even being able to open a bonnet of a car."

"Really? I haven't heard that story. It's interesting."

"Well, I should take off now. I have an appointment with a customer company. Thank you for the tea."

When it was lunchtime, Gun-Ho went to the company cafeteria. There was a long line already. When the workers saw Gun-Ho in line, they gave a bow to him. Gun-Ho was thinking of standing in line with other workers for a second, and then he decided to eat somewhere else. He didn't want the employees to feel uncomfortable standing in line with their company's president.

When he was walking out of the cafeteria, he ran into the general affairs director.

"Sir, do you have already had your lunch?"

"No, I just decided to eat somewhere else. The line is too long. If you haven't

had your lunch yet, why don't you join me?"

"Sure, sir. I will bring my car."

Gun-Ho and the general affairs director headed to Seonggeo Town around a reservoir. There was a Korean restaurant that specialized in soft tofu stew. While having lunch, Director Choi made a report.

"We've sent out the invitation letters for the Dyeon Korea's building dedication ceremony. We sent it to the local government officials in Asan City as well."

"But we are not sure how many of them will actually come, right? If we don't see any local official in our ceremony, that could be a problem, but if we have so many of them, that could also be a problem."

"Even though they don't want to come, we still have to send the invitation to them. Otherwise, they would consider that we ignored them."

"Haha. Really?"

"It's true. People say that government officials cannot help your business, but they can certainly ruin your business."

"Haha. You are so funny, Director Choi."

"I'm serious."

"The soft tofu stew is really good here."

"That's why I brought you here, sir."

297 Top Star—Seol-Bing 3 – Part 2

"The building dedication ceremony is just around the corner. We will have to select the workers who will participate in the ceremony."

"It's already done. We have already experienced trial and error while we prepared for the building ceremony of the factory in Jiksan Town. This is our second time of the ceremony. We know what to do. The two researchers who received the training in the U.S. asked me to let them participate in the ceremony. They already know that they would be reallocated to Dyeon Korea."

"Hmm, really?"

There were three blue-collar workers across the hall. They were having lunch with liquor. It seemed that they had already finished three bottles of soju. One of them shouted,

"Give us one more bottle of soju."

Gun-Ho said to the general affairs director,

"They already had three bottles of soju and it's still work hours. And they ordered another bottle."

"People say that the labor workers take energy from liquor. The soju that they ordered is the popular brand these days, maybe because a pretty actress advertises it, and her picture is on the soju bottle. Oh, there is a poster of her on the wall."

When Gun-Ho turned his head to look at the poster which was hanging on the wall, his eyes widened. An actress was smiling with a glass of soju in her hand.

'It's Seol-Bing!'

When Gun-Ho recognized Seol-Bing in the poster, his heart started beating really fast.

"She is so pretty, isn't she? Her name is Seol-Bing. She is so popular these days."

"Hmm..."

"You don't know of her, sir? She is the main actress in the soap opera—Shade of Desire. My wife is so into that soap opera. She watches it every day."

"That Seol-Bing woman is that popular?"

"She is on the top these days. You seem to be not very interested in the entertainment field, sir. Haha."

Without responding to the general affairs director's comment, Gun-Ho just focused on finishing his lunch.

After lunch, Gun-Ho usually felt drowsy.

After he came back to his office that day, Gun-Ho couldn't stop thinking of Seol-Bing. His phone started ringing at that moment.

"This is the branch manager of the stock brokerage firm. Sir, how have you been?"

"Huh? Oh, hi."

"I was just wondering how you are doing, sir. We can get busy when the wealthy people like you do something with your funds. I've noticed that you, President Goo who is the big player of Gangnam have been so quiet these days, so I just decided to give you a call."

"There must be many other big players."

"No, sir. You are the real big player. Other investors are not that big."

"What made you give me a call today?"

"Are you still in a provincial city? I've heard you are actively growing your business there."

"Well, I'm just running a small business."

"It seems you haven't done much with your funds in your stock account after you sold all of your stocks last time. You still have a substantial amount of funds in

your account, just sitting there, and I'd like to recommend you to invest it somewhere very safe."

"I don't know."

"The U.S. raised their interest rate and that will affect us, and we expect our country's interest rate to increase soon."

"The funds will be diverted from the stock market then."

"That's why we are debating with ourselves, and we are trying to find somewhere else for our major customers to invest in other than the stock market. Are you, by any chance, interested in investing in mutual funds, especially for investing in the foreign stock market?"

"No, I'm not. Why are you recommending investing in the foreign stock market? You just said the interest rate will go up."

"There are some very good stocks in some developing countries."

"I don't invest in the stock market anymore."

"Sir, you are losing money by just storing your funds in the account. There are so many programs that guarantee a 2.5% increase in your fund. Think about it. 2.5% might seem small, but if you invest 10 billion won, the annual return would be 250 million won. If you invest 100 billion won, you get 2.5 billion won per year. Will you just let these opportunities pass?"

"Hmm. What sorts of programs do you have that guarantee 2.5%?"

"There is a private equity fund and foreign currency investment. Or, you can invest in municipal or national bonds."

"Okay. Can you make a customized portfolio of the programs that will fit my needs?"

"Of course, sir. I will have the portfolio ready. Can we then maybe have lunch together once the portfolio is completed? Are you often coming to Seoul? I read the newspaper saying that you acquired RiverStar Building in Sinsa Town. When you come to Seoul for business, please just give me a call."

"Okay, I will do that."

Gun-Ho agreed with the stock brokerage company's branch manager that simply storing the funds in the account was a waste. By putting the funds in another place, he could easily make 2.5% of his funds. It didn't sound bad at all. With 100 billion won, he could make 2.5 billion won which was a significant amount of money. Currently, Gun-Ho had 170 billion won in his stock account.

It was May.

Min-Hyeok's wedding in Korea was finally scheduled. Because of his parents' moving to Hyundai HomeTown Condo in Juan Town, the wedding was scheduled a bit later than initially expected. It was after Dyeon Korea's building dedication ceremony.

"It is nice that his wedding was not scheduled on the same day as our building dedication ceremony."

Gun-Ho gave a call to Jae-Sik Moon in GH Media.

"Chief Editor Moon? It's me, Gun-Ho Goo!"

"Oh, President Goo!"

"Are you aware of Min-Hyeok's wedding in Korea? The date is fixed now."

"Yeah. I received a call for it."

"Can you make calls to other friends from high school?"

"I am actually doing it. I guess everyone will be at his wedding."

"Really? I suppose Min-Hyeok is popular among high school friends."

Jae-Sik didn't say anything in responding to Gun-Ho's comment, but he was thinking that,

"I'm sure everyone will appear at Min-Hyeok's wedding. That's not because they like Min-Hyeok so much, but because they know Gun-Ho will be there too. They want to get close to Gun-Ho. They are very clever and calculating. They

are the people who called me a swindler when I couldn't deliver the high school alumni directory book on time because of my personal situation. They didn't even hesitate to use cursing words towards me and they spread words that I deceived them and extorted their money. It was not even a huge amount that they thought I took from them. It was 30,000 or 50,000 won. Come to think of it, Gun-Ho is a nice person, maybe because he has a colorful life experience. He had suffered from debts before, and he used to work as a factory worker too.'

Jae-Sik continued to think about Gun-Ho.

'What if Gun-Ho was not a rich man? If he was not rich, would he have treated me the way he had? He told me once that when he was extremely suffering financially, he still give 100,000 won to Won-Chul to congratulate him on his wedding as his wedding gift. At that time, I didn't even go to his wedding. I think I was doing better than Gun-Ho back then. Well, I guess Gun-Ho was just a decent man no matter how much money he has.'

Jae-Sik suddenly heard Gun-Ho's voice.

"Hey, why aren't you saying anything. Can you hear me?"

Jae-Sik forgot for a second that he was talking with Gun-Ho on the phone.

"Yeah, I can hear you. I guess I just had a bad cell phone reception for a second. I hear you fine now. Well, anyway, don't worry about contacting other friends. I will take care of it."

"Really? That's good. Okay then. I will talk to you later."

298 Art Exhibition 1 – Part 1

Right after Gun-Ho got off the phone with Jae-Sik Moon, he received another call from President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"Sir, this is Jeong-Sook Shin. I've heard that President Min-Hyeok Kim is having a wedding in Korea soon."

"That's right. What about it?"

"So, his father-in-law and mother-in-law will come to Korea to attend the wedding, right?"

"Of course. Why don't you come to the wedding too?"

"Absolutely. I will be there. I just want to talk to his father-in-law who is a painter."

"Mr. Ding Feng? Why do you want to see him?"

"I am thinking of having his solo art exhibition in Korea. I am talking about the art exhibition of the master of northern school literati paintings—Mr. Ding Feng with GH Media's name."

"His solo art exhibition? That could make money?"

"I believe so, and that's why I am suggesting this to you, sir. Mr. Ding Feng's paintings are so great that people will like them a lot. You paid 550,000 won for his painting yourself too. We can have his solo art exhibition in Korea, and we sell his painting about the same size for 1,500,000 won. That could be a very lucrative business. I believe we can at least cover the rent for the venue and the fees we charge."

"I was told that the oriental paintings are not so popular these days. Do you really think people will pay that much for his paintings?"

"It is true that we will have to take some risk. But that's how we make money in business, isn't it?"

"Haha. You sound more businessman than I am who is currently running an actual business. Well, I will support you on this. Do what you have to do."

"Thank you, sir. I think it's better that you talk to President Min-Hyeok Kim about this first. So he is aware that I want to have his father-in-law's art exhibition in Korea."

"No problem. I will do that."

After getting off the phone with President Shin, Gun-Ho grumbled about President Shin's art exhibition idea.

"I doubt it will be lucrative at all. She is trying to do all those work for small money. Say, we bring his paintings, about 30 of them, and we sell each for 1,500,000 won. Assuming we could sell all of the 30 paintings, we would make only 45 million won. We will have to give half of the sales revenue to the painter, and we are bearing the rent for the exhibition venue and marketing cost. We won't be left with much in the end. Hmm. It's a waste of our labor and time. Let me think about how I can turn this into a lucrative business... Maybe I can make some connection with Seukang Li."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Min-Hyeok Kim first.

"Hey, President Shin of GH Media wants to meet with your father-in-law after your wedding."

"President Jeong-Sook Shin? For what?"

"She wants to have Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition in Korea with his oriental paintings."

"Really? I will talk to my father-in-law."

"Can we tell him that Seukang Li recommended this to us?"

"Well, why not? By the way, the international book exhibition in Shanghai is a success. I read a newspaper article about it and it says that so many young people came to the book exhibition to get the pamphlet for the performance to be held at the sports complex."

"Really? That's good to know."

"Young people are so crazy about the Korean top star—Seol-Bing—and Chinese top star—Ye Long. They both will do the performance there. The news about the performance is everywhere on the Internet."

"If it's a sports complex, it can accommodate a vast number of people, right?"

"I believe they can accommodate more than 10,000 people. The ticket for that kind of performance is very expensive too. If they could get 10,000 people, how much money would they make? Wow. Moreover, it's not a one-day performance, right? They will do it for a few days."

"Hmmm. The entertainment business can be highly lucrative."

"Oh, and there is a news article about President Jeong-Sook Shin in the Shanghai newspaper. I made a newspaper clipping."

"Really? What does it say about her?"

"Let me read this for you."

"Yeah. Read it to me."

"Shanghai's international book exhibition had a grand opening at the People's Park exhibition hall. Twenty-six national and international publishing companies participated in it. The book exhibition had drawn a lot of attention from people even before it opened its door to the public. The book exhibition was successful even from the opening day by making sales contracts. The French publishing company—Nantes purchased publication right of a children's storybook, and the Italian publishing company—Verona purchased a novel. Additionally, a Korean publishing company—GH Media made a contract for its publishing right of history books.

GH Media's president—Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin stated that she was certain that the Chinese history books will be very popular in Korea because of the close historical relationship between the two countries: China and Korea. GH Media purchased three Chinese history books."

"Haha. As far as I know, President Shin didn't even talk to any journalist while

we were in Shanghai. I can't believe they just made up things like that and put it in the newspaper."

"Do you want me to go on reading it further?"

"Nah. That's enough."

"Well, then, I will talk to my father-in-law about his art exhibition and will let you know."

Gun-Ho then made a call to Seukang Li.

"Hey, I heard so many people came to the book exhibition."

"That's right. I was so worried that we wouldn't have enough traffic there. But you can say it was a success. I do appreciate you, President Goo. Distributing the performance pamphlet at the book exhibition was an excellent idea."

"You're very welcome, friend. It's actually a return of your hard work."

"So many young people came. I didn't know Korean celebrities are so popular among Chinese youths. It helped our sales too. Chinese cartoon books and romance books were sold substantially."

"Those books' publishing companies must be very happy."

"Of course."

"Oh, you know what? After visiting the book exhibition, we went to see Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition that was being held around the same area. He was having an art exhibition with his oriental paintings."

"Oh, he did? I do like his paintings. My father knows him personally. I believe I have his painting at home. Oh, isn't he President Min-Hyeok's father-in-law?"

"That's right. You must have seen him at Min-Hyeok's wedding. By the way, President Shin of GH Media really likes his paintings, and she wants to have his solo art exhibition in Korea."

"Really?"

"We could get connected with the painter this way because of you, Seukang Li. If it wasn't for your book exhibition, I wouldn't have visited his art exhibition."

"If Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition succeeds in Korea, can you let me know? Since I am in charge of the art field in Shanghai, I'd really like to know how it goes."

"Sure, will do."

"If his art exhibition is successful, I want to try an art exhibition of Chinese young painters with their modern paintings."

"Really? That sounds really good too."

"And also, if Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition is confirmed to be held in Korea, please let me know. I will inform the press here that the famous Korean publishing company which participated in our international book exhibition will hold a solo art exhibition in Korea with the Chinese painter—Mr. Ding Feng. And also saying that they discovered Mr. Ding Feng's fascinating paintings when they visited his exhibition in Shanghai after visiting our book exhibition."

"Sounds good. I will let you know."

After getting off the phone with Seukang Li, Gun-Ho was thinking,

'If we do an art exhibition with Chinese young painters' modern paintings, that can turn into a lucrative business in Korea. Is President Jeong-Sook Shin aiming it? Because she knows that I have a personal and close relationship with Director Li of the bureau of cultural affairs and arts in Shanghai. If so, she is a very smart businesswoman. Oh, that's right. I was told that she worked as a curator in an art museum when she was in her 30s.'

299 Art Exhibition 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho received a call from the stock brokerage firm. Its branch manager wanted to show the customized investment portfolio which Gun-Ho requested the other day.

"Where are you, sir?"

"I am in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City right now."

"Jiksan Town is close to North Cheonan City's IC. Well, I will come to your place then. I want to see your factory too."

"It will take a long time."

"That's okay. I will be there around lunchtime."

President Jang-Hwan Song came to Gun-Ho's office and talked about business matters for a while. Before he left the office, he asked Gun-Ho to have lunch with him.

"The president of our vendor company—Oriental Tech— is coming here today. Why don't you join us for lunch? Mr. Internal Auditor will join too. Oriental Tech's president wants to buy us lunch."

"I actually have pre-engagement for lunch today."

"Oh, you will have a guest today?"

"A branch manager from a stock brokerage firm is visiting me today from Seoul. I won't be able to join you for lunch."

"A brokerage firm's branch manager? Is he coming for the preliminary examination on our KOSDAQ registration application? We are not ready for it yet. We don't have to rush it."

"No no. He is coming for my personal matters, not for our business. By the way, does the KOSDAQ registration matter have something to do with a stock

brokerage firm?"

"Yes. The registration is done through a stock brokerage firm."

"Hmm. I see. Well, tell the Oriental Tech's president that I'm sorry that I couldn't join him for lunch today."

"Okay, sir. I will do that."

The Korean restaurant owner in Akasaka, Japan called Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, how have you been?"

"Oh, it's good to hear from you, Ms. Choi."

"You remember my voice. Haha. I thought you forgot about me."

"Of course, I remember you and your name, President Choi."

"Do you then remember a woman with the name—Mori Aikko?"

"Haha. I guess you are upset about something."

"That poor girl, Mori Aikko."

"I'm sorry."

"I told Mori Aikko to get another boyfriend if President Goo doesn't show up like this."

"I've been so busy with the business in China."

"Do you have another girl who is wearing Qipao by any chance?"

"Haha. No, not at all. The only girl I have is Mori Aikko. Believe me."

"I talked with Ms. Jang from the bar in Hannam Town. She said that she was completely done with the interior of her bar a long time ago, but you had never appeared at the bar."

"Well, true... I just didn't have a chance to go there. I am not staying in Seoul,

but I am in Cheonan City."

"Why don't you at least give a call to Mori Aikko? She is a young and beautiful girl. She can get a boyfriend in no time if she wants to. She is just a naive girl who grew up in an excluded area— Gion (Kyoto's famous geisha district) only learning Odori."

"I know that."

"Don't tell her that I called you if you see her. I just heard things from Mama-san Segawa Joonkko."

"Thank you for your call. I will go to Japan this Friday and stay there until Sunday. I really miss Mori Aikko too."

The branch manager of the stock brokerage firm arrived.

"Wow. Your factory is amazing. It looks better than the building in Gangnam District, Seoul."

"Was it easy to find the way here?"

"It was easy enough. The factory is located on the main road. I just followed Bong-Joo Yi Road and it led me right here. Why do they name the road after Bong-Joo Yi?"

"The athlete—Bong-Joo Yi is from the area here."

"Oh, I see. That's why they named the road after his."

"Well, why don't you have a seat?"

"Thank you."

The branch manager sat on a sofa while placing his briefcase on the coffee table.

"Well, since it's lunchtime, everyone is out for lunch at the company cafeteria. Even my secretary is out for lunch, leaving me with no one who could prepare tea for us."

"Oh, don't worry about it. I've had my tea on the way at the resting area."

The branch manager started pulling out papers from his briefcase. The weather was hot and the branch manager was wearing a business suit with a tie. He was sweating.

"I've prepared three portfolios for your asset management. The first one is a plan with 70% of risk and 30% of safety. The second one is 50 and 50, and the third one is 70% of safety and 30% of risk."

Gun-Ho read the portfolio carefully. Each program listed the duration, estimated returns and description of the program. They were not a printed pamphlet or anything like that, but it was typed in Excel. He probably made it just for Gun-Ho.

It seemed that the secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park came back from her lunch. She brought green tea to Gun-Ho's office.

"Are you already done with your lunch, Ms. Park?"

"Someone told me that you have a guest in your office, sir. So I finished my lunch as fast as I could."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt your lunch. I shouldn't have come at lunchtime."

"No, it's okay."

Secretary Hee-Jeong Park gave a slight nod to the branch manager and left the office.

After reviewing the document that the branch manager brought, Gun-Ho said,

"I will go with the plan no. 3. The safest one."

"I knew you would pick that one. The big players with substantial cash, they usually picked the safest one."

"Really?"

"Sir, I feel bad that I used your lunchtime. I'd like to buy you some lunch today."

"Oh, no. I should treat you. You came all the way here from Seoul to see me after all."

"No. I will treat you, sir. I insist. You are a very important client to us. I brought my company's business credit card."

The branch manager waved the credit card.

"You are not just an important client but you are the most important client to us."

"You are the branch manager in the Gangnam area. You must have other clients with a substantial amount of cash."

"Even in Gangnam District, we call the people with several tens of billions as a big player. You have hundreds of billions won, sir. You are the biggest player, sir."

"Well, let's just go to have lunch."

Gun-Ho took the branch manager of the stock brokerage firm to a Korean restaurant that specialized in a set menu with seasoned wild vegetables, which was nearby Seonggeo Mountain.

"Wow. I like this place. It has fresh air and pleasant breeze. I guess the big players usually live in a city with nature like here, not in a busy city like Gangnam."

"I didn't choose this area to live in. My factory just happened to be located here, that's all."

"Oh, have you applied for the KOSDAQ registration? Your company is registered with DART (Data Analysis, Retrieval, and Transfer System), but I believe it's not with KOSDAQ. Am I right?"

"I'm thinking of going public maybe after three years. I will first have to increase our sales revenue and reduce debts."

"President Goo, if you could let us do your KOSDAQ registration, I will do my best to make it successful."

300 Art Exhibition 2 – Part 1

Dyeon Korea's vice president—Mr. Adam Castler—and Director Dong-Chan Kim came to GH Mobile to see Gun-Ho. The interpreter was following them to Gun-Ho's office.

"Please have a seat. I do appreciate your hard work for Dyeon Korea, starting off in the small container office. I am so glad the building will soon be completed."

Mr. Adam Castler said,

"I came to let you know that we want to ask Dyeon America to ship the equipment now. If we wait until the building dedication ceremony is over, it would be too late. Once the equipment is shipped from Seattle, they will arrive in Busan after a few weeks. They will then have to be passed through customs at the Busan port before they could finally be sent to Asan City. So, I strongly suggest having the equipment be shipped as soon as possible."

"Can we receive the equipment to Pyeongtaek Port instead of Busan? It's closer to Asan City."

"All international shipments are supposed to arrive at Busan Port."

"Hmm."

"The equipment we will receive is the first batch of investment in kind from Dyeon America."

"We haven't even received the initial operating funds yet. You do know how much each co-venturer is supposed to contribute to Dyeon Korea's initial operating funds, right?"

"Yes, I am aware of it. Dyeon America and GH Mobile, each party is supposed to send 450,000 dollars to Dyeon Korea."

"That's correct. Pursuant to our joint venture agreement, the authorized capital is 20 million dollars while the paid-in capital is 10 million dollars. The initial operating cost is 1 million dollars, so each party needs to contribute 500,000

dollars in cash. Last time, each party already put 50,000 dollars, so we need to put an additional 450,000 dollars (about 450 million Korean won). Once Dyeon America shows us the deposit slip of their portion of 450,000 dollars, we will deposit our portion right away. We have the cash ready."

"Sounds good. I actually just requested Dyeon America to send 450,000 dollars to us before heading to your office. They will send the money from Bank of America, and we already gave the bank the necessary information for the wire-transfer including the recipient's bank's SWIFT code."

"Since the paid-in capital is 10 million dollars, we split it in half, so each party contributes 5 million dollars. Out of 5 million dollars, 500,000 dollars must be in cash, and the remaining 4.5 million dollars can be invested in kind. GH Mobile paid it by contributing the land where the factory is being built on, and this is it, while Dyeon America wants to contribute the equipment and they will have to ship the equipment several times until the value of the total equipment reaches 4.5 million dollars."

Gun-Ho wrote it down to help with the accuracy of the interpretation, so the interpreter wouldn't get confused with all the numbers.

Authorized capital – \$20,000,000 (will receive gradually)

Paid-in capital – \$10,000,000 (GH Mobile \$5,000,000; Dyeon America \$5,000,000)

< method="" to="" satisfy="" the="" said="" funds="">

Dyeon America:

\$50,000 in cash + \$450,000 in cash + \$4.5 million in-kind (Equipment) = \$5 million

GH Mobile:

\$50,000 in cash + \$450,000 in cash + \$4.5 million in-kind (Factory Land) = \$5 million

(The factory building is not included.)

Gun-Ho then showed his agreement to the immediate equipment shipping.

The following day, Gun-Ho received the deposit slip from Dyeon America via fax. After verifying the actual fund deposited in Dyeon Korea's bank account, Gun-Ho transferred GH Mobile's portion of the funds to Dyeon Korea's bank account and gave the deposit slip to Mr. Adam Castler.

It was the day of the building dedication ceremony.

The new factory building looked majestic, and a great pine tree was planted in its yard along with a crepe myrtle tree. The landscape was nicely done.

In the yard, about 200 plastic chairs were placed. A billboard was showing the aerial view of the new factory. Director Yoon, who was wearing a construction uniform, was standing next to the billboard with a stick, which was longer than a cue stick, in his hand. The general affairs director would proceed with the ceremony just like the last building dedication ceremony for the factory in Jiksan Town.

Gun-Ho arrived early at the ceremony venue. The employees, who the general affairs director selected to participate in the ceremony, were leading the guests to their seats. They were wearing their company uniforms with white gloves.

"Our president is here."

"Our president is here."

The employees opened the car door as Gun-Ho parked his car. They showed him to the temporary waiting area in the building. In the waiting area, the female workers were distributing a cup of coffee to the guests.

The general affairs director ran to Gun-Ho and said,

"Sir, you can stay here, and you can just join us once we begin the ceremony."

A female worker at the sales department came to Gun-Ho and put a flower on his chest.

A lot of people started arriving when the ceremony was about to begin. It seemed that there were way more people coming than GH Mobile's building

dedication ceremony.

Director Dong-Chan Kim was in the waiting area with Gun-Ho. He said while sipping his coffee,

"I expect to see a lot of government officials and politicians coming today since this is a building dedication ceremony for a joint venture with an American company. They can use the picture they would take here to show the public that they have been making an enormous effort to bring more foreign capital in the community."

Gun-Ho just smiled without saying a word in response to Director Kim's comment.

Director Kim said while looking outside the window,

"Oh, my gosh. I guess we have a tycoon coming to our ceremony. The parking lot is almost full. Sir, I think you'd better go out and see who just came."

Gun-Ho slowly walked out to the factory yard while smiling. The general affairs director introduced Gun-Ho to the visitors.

"This is our president."

"Congratulations. I'm Gil-Do Yi. I'm a congressman."

"Congratulations. I'm the chairman of the Asan City's Business Association."

"Congratulations. I am the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Chungnam Province."

"Congratulations. I'm the Chair of the city council of Asan City."

"Congratulations. I'm the manager of the local economic department of Asan City Hall."

"Congratulations. I'm the branch manager of Asan Bank."

Gun-Ho met with a great number of people that day. He didn't think he would remember all who he had met that day. Everyone who Gun-Ho met with gave

their business cards to him. A high-ranking police officer came too.

"Hi, Mr. Chief of Police. Thank you for coming."

Gun-Ho greeted the chief of police of Asan City.

The ceremony started with the general affairs director's voice on the microphone.

"We will now start the joint venture—Dyeon Korea's building dedication ceremony. Ladies and Gentlemen, please have a seat."

Gun-Ho's congratulatory message ensued. He tried to make it short for the sake of the government officials who usually had a very busy schedule. When Gun-Ho wrapped up his speech by stating that he would contribute to the local economy by achieving his exporting goals of 100 million dollars, everyone at the ceremony applauded. Vice President—Mr. Adam Castler—gave his speech as well as he represented Dyeon America. He made it short too. The same interpreter—Mr. Lee—interpreted for the guests. As Mr. Adam Castler made his speech in English, people felt it was really the ceremony for a joint venture with a foreign company.

301 Art Exhibition 2 – Part 2

After Director Yoon's brief description of the factory construction and the layout of the building, the ribbon-cutting ceremony ensued.

At the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Gun-Ho stood in the middle with Mr. Adam Castler standing next to him. Some of the guests were invited to join them such as a local congressman, city official, chief police officer, President Jang-Hwan Song, and GH Media's President Jeong-Sook Shin.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony looked decent as some conspicuous guests were participating like a foreigner, a man in a police uniform and other neat people in a business suit.

As they were cutting the ribbon, Jong-Suk Park set off the fireworks. Gun-Ho was wondering where he bought those fireworks from. Gun-Ho could hear camera flashes along with the fireworks noise. The local newspaper journalists were taking pictures of the ceremony.

Even after the ceremony was over, the local government officials were busy taking pictures with Gun-Ho in front of the banner showing it was the building dedication ceremony for a joint venture with an American company. After they were done with photo shooting, they left without joining other people at the reception. They didn't even bother looking around inside the newly constructed factory building.

"Ha. Damn. They seemed to have come here to take pictures. They are leaving without even attending the reception."

"Well, maybe that's good for everyone."

The snacks and beverages that were prepared for the reception were all enjoyed by the employees.

"Sir, I have something that I'd like to ask you."

Gun-Ho turned around to see who was talking to him. It was Director Dong-

Chan Kim.

"At the congratulatory speech, I've heard you saying that GH Mobile contributed the land as a co-venturer of Dyeon Korea, but not the factory building. I'm not sure if that was intended or if you just forgot to mention the building."

"I intentionally didn't include the factory building in our investment in-kind for this joint venture."

"Why is that so?"

"We can use the building when we increase the company capital later."

"Increasing capital?"

"Yes. For example, let's say we generate ordinary income of 5 billion in the first year. We leave 1 billion out of 5 as retention money, and we use the remaining 4 billion as dividends."

"In that case, GH Mobile and Dyeon America would receive 2 billion each."

"Right. Even though GH Mobile would take 2 billion of dividends, we wouldn't send the other 2 billion to Dyeon America, but instead, we would re-invest it into Dyeon Korea."

"Ohhh. So at that point, we value the factory building for 2 billion, and we use it to match Dyeon America's additional 2 billion investments?"

"That's right, Director Kim. You are so quick in understanding my intention."

"Did you already talk about this with Dyeon America?"

"It's about the company capital. The building will be appraised later. Additionally, once the company goes public..."

"Oh, I see, I see. Then the value of the company share will go up dramatically. The people in Dyeon America must have already calculated that possibility. They must be very smart."

"Director Kim, did you use an expensive shampoo this morning in washing your

hair? Your brain seems to work great today."

"All the necessary furniture and stuff will arrive this afternoon. Until then, This is not a good place to stay, sir. Why don't you take a rest at the office in Jiksan Town?"

"You did a good job today, Director Kim."

"I don't think I did a lot of work, but thank you, sir."

"Well, why don't we have lunch altogether? Let's meet at Onyang Hot Spring Hotel for lunch. Come with Mr. Adam Castler and Mr. Interpreter Lee to the hotel. I will meet you there."

"It's only 11 am now. Are you going to stop by the office in Jiksan Town before lunch?"

"No. I will take President Jeong-Sook Shin to the train station before heading to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. She is having a tour of the factory right now."

"She could join us for lunch."

"She told me earlier that she wanted to go back to Seoul before lunch. I will ask her again."

"Maybe we can have lunch early. We will have to come back here once the furniture and stuff arrive this afternoon anyway."

"Sounds good. Then, let's meet at the hotel around 11:50 am."

President Jeong-Sook Shin said she would just go to KTX station without having lunch, but Gun-Ho insisted strongly and took her to Onyang Hot Spring Hotel for lunch. They decided to stay at the café inside the hotel while waiting for the other party.

"You have something urgent you need to attend to in Seoul?"

"No, not really. I just didn't want to impose. I feel bad, especially our small company—GH Media—isn't generating much money yet, and I know you are so busy and occupied in running a huge company here."

"Don't say that. A company starts small, and they grow big later. We usually don't start a business on a large scale right away."

"At the ribbon-cutting ceremony earlier today, I was thinking if I'm actually qualified to attend the ceremony like that. There were government officials and politicians."

"That's a silly thing to say. Just have lunch with us before going back to Seoul. I insist. I will be very happy if you join us for lunch. Director Kim and Mr. Adam Castler will be here soon. You remember the interpreter—Mr. Lee? You are the one who introduced him to me. He will be here too."

"They are all from Dyeon Korea. I don't want to interrupt you in doing your business."

"No no. Oh, you know what? I talked to Seukang Li earlier about your suggestion on Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition in Korea. He was very interested in it."

"Oh, you already talked with him over the phone?"

"He said that since he is in charge of cultural affairs and arts, he knows a lot of painters and artists. He was suggesting having an art exhibition for Chinese young painters. He is more than willing to introduce good artists and an art gallery."

"Really?"

President Shin looked a bit down that day until she heard Gun-Ho talking about the art exhibition.

"I don't know much about paintings, but I read from a newspaper the other day that in China, there are a lot of good young painters with non-figurative paintings."

"That's right. There are many Chinese young painters who are well known worldwide. What I like about that is that they are not afraid of challenging new areas."

"Min-Hyeok will soon have his wedding in Korea. Once Mr. Ding Feng comes

to Korea, you will have your chance to discuss it with him. Seukang Li is very interested in Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition in Korea."

President Shin smiled.

While Gun-Ho and President Shin were conversing, Director Kim and Mr. Adam Castler arrived.

"Let me make an official introduction. Mr. Adam Castler, this is GH Media's president—Ms. Jeong-Sook Shin."

Jeong-Sook Shin offered her hand to Mr. Adam Castler for a handshake with a smile.

"Oh, a pleasure to meet you, ma'am."

Mr. Adam Castler actually spoke in Korean. He already started picking up a few Korean words.

As Jeong-Sook Shin gave him her business card, Mr. Adam Castler looked at the English version on the back of the business card.

"Oh, it's a publishing company!"

Mr. Adam Castler extended his hand to President Jeong-Sook Shin for another handshake.

302 Meeting in Tokyo – Part 1

The day after the building dedication ceremony was Friday.

Gun-Ho went to Asan City to Dyeon Korea's factory again to see how things were going there. All the furniture and other supplies were already placed, and the workers were busy arranging things around the factory and the offices. Once Gun-Ho saw the workers working busy, he decided to go back to Jiksan Town to his GH Mobile office. He didn't want to interrupt their work there.

Once he arrived in his office in Jiksan Town, he called for the general affairs director.

"Where are those researchers who received the training from Lymondell Dyeon in U.S.?"

"They participated in the building dedication ceremony yesterday in Asan City, and now they are back here working at the research center. I can call them if you have something you want to talk about with them."

"No, that's okay. Please prepare the papers to relocate them to the factory in Asan City. They will be working in the production department of Dyeon Korea."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho then made a phone call to Dyeon Korea to talk with Director Dong-Chan Kim.

"I stopped by the factory in Asan City this morning, and I just came back to Jiksan Town since everyone there seemed very busy today."

"Oh, really? I actually have something to talk about with you, sir, and I was waiting for you to come."

"What do you want to talk to me about?"

"It's about those two researchers who received training in U.S. Since Dyeon Korea is ready to open our business since we are done with the building

dedication ceremony, we'd like to have them here in Dyeon Korea. I've already talked to Mr. Adam Castler here and the research center's chief officer at GH Mobile about it."

"Of course. I will send them to Dyeon Korea."

"If they start working here in Dyeon Korea, can we make their severance pay successive? So the amount of their current severance pay with GH Mobile is continuously being accumulated with Dyeon Korea?"

"No, I don't think that's possible. First of all, Dyeon America will not agree to that. That would obligate Dyeon Korea to give severance pay to Mr. Adam Castler if he decided to quit now, which doesn't make sense."

"That's true. I was asking about it because those two researchers were wondering about their severance pay with GH Mobile, and they were hoping that they can continue to accumulate the amount even after they start working for Dyeon Korea."

"I will think about changing their salary step then."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho then made a call to the research center for the chief officer.

"We will move the two researchers to Dyeon Korea."

"Yes, sir. Our research center has five new workers now, so we should be good without them."

"Would you tell those two researchers to come to my office now?"

"Sure. Will do, sir."

The general affairs director came into Gun-Ho's office with a report.

"Sir, I brought the notice of relocation for those two researchers as you instructed."

"I will take a look at the report later; I have to take care of something that

requires my immediate attention. Please leave the report on my desk."

"Yes, sir."

Once the general affairs director left Gun-Ho's office, the two researchers entered the office.

"Both of you started working here as an experienced researcher. How many years have you been working here?"

"I've been here for four years now, sir."

"For me, it has been two years, sir."

"I'm relocating both of you to Dyeon Korea as of today. Since you are equipped with special training from Lymondell Dyeon in U.S., I'm sure you will do great in Dyeon Korea. You have to know that the National Pension is successive, but the company's severance pay is not. You will get your severance pay from GH Mobile before you leave for Dyeon Korea, and you will start another severance pay with Dyeon Korea once you start working for them."

"....."

The two researchers didn't say a word while lowering their heads.

"Well, instead, I will move your salary step."

The two researchers lifted their heads and looked at Gun-Ho with hope in their eyes.

"I will gladly work for Dyeon Korea, sir,"

The younger researcher with two years of work experience with GH Mobile said.

The senior researcher who had been working for GH Mobile for four years took some time before agreeing.

"I will work for Dyeon Korea as well. So, can I assume that I will receive the severance pay for my past four years of working here now in cash?"

"Yes, you will."

"Thank you, sir. I will do my best working for Dyeon Korea."

Gun-Ho opened the notice of relocation, which the general affairs director left on his desk earlier. The two researchers' employment records were attached to the notice.

"They have been with their current position for four years and two years. I think they will be more excited with a promotion in their positions instead of just raising their salary."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs director.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes. We will have to make some changes on their notice of relocation."

"What changes are you referring to, sir?"

"Make a position promotion for both researchers with one step up and give their severance pay. Also, make a severance pay to Director Dong-Chan Kim as well."

"Yes, sir."

"I believe that the amount of Director Dong-Chan Kim's severance pay should be substantial."

"I don't think so. We paid his severance pay when he was promoted to an executive. Also, he took his severance pay when he bought his house."

"Hmm, really? Okay, sir. I will do that, and I will take this report with me if you have already reviewed them."

"Also, can you talk with the assistant manager in the accounting team and the general affairs team? Ask them if they are willing to be relocated to Dyeon Korea."

"Yes, sir."

After the general affairs director left his office, Gun-Ho also quietly walked out

of the office, and he told the secretary—Ms. Hee-Jeong Park—on the way out,

"I will be gone for the day. I'm not coming back today. You have a wonderful weekend."

"You too, sir."

Gun-Ho then drove to Gimpo International Airport. He was going to Japan.

It was getting dark when he boarded the flight to Japan, but once the flight took off and reached above the clouds, it was sunny. Gun-Ho was looking down at the clouds and thinking about Mori Aikko. His heart started beating fast.

"Aikko. Hang on there. Your oppa is coming to you!"

Gun-Ho had sent a text message when he was still in his office to make sure of Mori Aikko's whereabouts. Thankfully, Mori Aikko was still in Tokyo.

The plane was full except for the business class area where Gun-Ho was sitting at. There were plenty of empty seats, and it was very comfortable. Gun-Ho stretched his legs. The flight attendants serving the business-class area were very nice.

"Would you like to have a drink, sir?"

Gun-Ho asked her to bring him a whiskey.

"I'd love to have a glass of whiskey, please."

While sipping his whiskey, Gun-Ho was looking out the window. The construction of the building in Asan City was completed, and its building dedication ceremony was over. Gun-Ho felt like he needed a break, and he loved the fact that he was on the way to see Mori Aikko.

303 Meeting in Tokyo – Part 2

It was after 7 pm, when Gun-Ho arrived in Daikanyama, Shibuya, Tokyo where Mori Aikko's condo was located. Mori Aikko kept the same entry code for the condo as Gun-Ho's phone number. The inside of her home was very well organized and clean.

No one was home and when Gun-Ho laid down on the bed, he received a text message from Mori Aikko.

"I am at the bar in Akasaka. We are having the Chief Cabinet Secretary today as our guest. I will be a bit late. I will be home around 10 pm. I love you, oppa."

Gun-Ho felt bored staying in an empty home by himself. He left the condo and took a walk on the street in Shibuya. Many roadside commercial stores with pretty interiors were luring him into their stores. Gun-Ho entered one of those stores and purchased a huge teddy bear for Mori Aikko. Carrying the teddy bear, Gun-Ho walked slowly toward Mori Aikko's home. It was still only 9 pm when he arrived there. He watched TV until he fell asleep.

After a while, Gun-Ho woke up to the sound of the door opening. It was Mori Aikko. She was carrying a huge plastic bag in her hand.

"Aikko!"

"Oppa!"

Gun-Ho abruptly hugged her tight. Gun-Ho could smell her perfume along with her sweat and a little bit of alcohol.

"Did you drink?"

"Yes. After watching my dance performance, the Chief Cabinet Secretary poured me a glass of liquor."

Gun-Ho started kissing her and couldn't stop.

"Oppa. Enough! I can't breathe."

"What's in your huge plastic bag?"

"It's a stage outfit. Mama-san gave it to me."

"I brought a bag too."

Gun-Ho lifted the plastic bag with the teddy bear in it."

"Oh, it's a teddy bear. Hahaha. It looks just like you, oppa."

"You want to see what a teddy bear is capable of?"

Gun-Ho pushed Mori Aikko to the bed.

"I have to take a shower first."

"That's okay. I don't mind."

Neither Gun-Ho nor Mori Aikko took a shower that night, and they stayed in bed for quite a while.

Gun-Ho had a Japanese lomein on the following day for breakfast. Mori Aikko prepared it for him. Gun-Ho didn't like it much, but he felt better after having a piece of apple as a dessert.

"I was told that Roppongi Hills is close from here. Let's go and have fun there today."

"Sounds good. I actually once prayed for having a decent man in my life at the Tokyo CityView on its 52nd floor in Roppongi Hills."

"Why did you pray there? Isn't it better to do your prayer in a temple?"

"You can see Mount Fuji from Roppongi Hills. I prayed while looking at the mountain. I went there with Mama-san at that time, and I prayed to meet a decent man as I was gazing at Mount Fuji. I guess that's how I got to meet you."

Mori Aikko laughed.

Gun-Ho went to Roppongi with Mori Aikko that day. Gun-Ho encountered foreigners there occasionally, maybe because there were so many foreign

embassies in the area. Gun-Ho walked fast as that was how he walked, and Mori Aikko had to walk faster than her usual pace to walk beside him. After having a meal at the restaurant inside Roppongi Hills, they went up to the Tokyo CityView. Mori Aikko prayed for something again while looking at Mount Fuji.

After sunset, Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko went into a popular nightclub in Roppongi. The music was very loud. Young men and women were dancing on the stage, which looked like a hip-hop dance, Gun-Ho thought.

Gun-Ho and Mori Aikko were having a beer while looking at the stage when Gun-Ho said,

"Look at them. They are not good dancers at all. Their moves are cheesy."

Mori Aikko closely observed those people, who were dancing on the stage.

"Well, Mori Aikko, I guess you'd better show them how to dance. Go up the stage."

"Haha, oppa! I don't think my dance would go well with the music here."

Mori Aikko lightly hit Gun-Ho's chest with her small fist.

It was Sunday morning.

Mori Aikko prepared rice porridge for breakfast, and they ate it together.

"Are you leaving now?"

"Yeah. I wanted to see you off when you take your flight to Korea today, but I have to leave now for Nagoya. I have a dance performance there. That's why Mama-san gave me the stage outfit that I brought home. I have to return it to her once I'm done with the performance today."

"Why didn't you just buy one for you. It's too heavy to carry it around in borrowing and returning it."

Mori Aikko laughed and said,

"You can't find an outfit like this in a regular store."

After Mori Aikko left her condo in Daikanyama, Gun-Ho stayed there and took a nap. He felt exhausted after spending a full day in Roppongi yesterday. He snored.

It was lunchtime when he woke up. He felt hungry and wanted to have Korean food.

"I can have Korean food at Ms. Choi's Korean restaurant in Akasaka!"

Gun-Ho arrived in Akasaka, Tokyo.

The restaurant was full since it was lunchtime. The restaurant owner—Ms. Choi—was sitting at the cashier counter. It seemed that she stayed in her restaurant during a busy time.

"Oh my gosh! President Goo! You are here."

"Your restaurant business is doing very well."

"Did you see Mori Aikko?"

"Of course. We had fun at Roppongi Hills yesterday."

"That's good to hear. Mori Aikko must have been very happy."

"I came here to have Korean food. I miss it already after having only Japanese food. I will just have a Seolleongtang (an ox bone soup)."

Gun-Ho couldn't make a long conversation with Ms. Choi since she was so busy during her business hours. He sat at the corner of the restaurant while having his Seolleongtang and walked out of there quickly after finishing it.

"I want a cup of coffee. I always have my coffee after lunch. Where do I want to have my coffee today?"

Gun-Ho walked around the area in search of a nice café, and he arrived at New Otani Hotel.

"Well, the hotel has a nice café. Even though it's pricey, I like their café. Let's go and have my lunch coffee there."

While sitting at the café and having his coffee, Gun-Ho looked at his watch.

"Maybe I'd better leave for the airport even though I still have plenty of time before boarding."

After finishing his coffee, Gun-Ho walked down to the hotel lobby. There were so many tourists at the front desks waiting for their turn to check-in. When he was passing by the front desk, someone called him.

"President Goo?"

Gun-Ho turned around and saw a man, who was looking at him with a smile. It was BM Entertainment's manager.

"Sir, it's good to see you here. I want to thank you again for your help in Shanghai the other day. You come to visit Japan pretty often?"

"I come here for business sometimes. Do you have a performance here too?"

"No. I actually came here for a photo-shoot with my staff. Oh, Seol-Bing is here too."

Seol-Bing was standing with a group of staff. She was still wearing her dark sunglasses.

"Oh, Ms. Seol-Bing, good to see you."

Gun-Ho walked toward Seol-Bing and extended his hand to her for a handshake. All of the staff looked at Gun-Ho.

Seol-Bing smiled as she took off her sunglasses.

"GH...?"

"Oh, you remember the name of my company. Yes, I'm Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile. It's really good to see you here in Japan after seeing you in Shanghai."

"Do you often come to Tokyo?"

"As a matter of fact, yes, I do come to Tokyo pretty often, especially when I do my Tokyo Planning."

"Tokyo... planning?"

"Right. I come here to spend some time in making some important decisions for my business."

Seol-Bing wore her sunglasses again while smiling.

"Well, it was good to see you too. I appreciate your help in Shanghai the other day."

Seol-Bing made a slight nod before leaving with the group of staff.

Gun-Ho was still standing there even after Seol-Bing took off. He mumbled,

"Did I just talk with the goddess—Venus?"

304 Joint Venture 1 – Part 1

It was Monday.

Gun-Ho went to work at the factory in Jiksan Town.

The secretary— Ms. Hee-Jeong Park brought a folder to Gun-Ho.

"What is this?"

"I made some newspaper clippings while you were not in the office."

"Newspaper clippings?"

"Yes, sir. It's about the building dedication ceremony of the factory in Asan City."

"Oh, It seemed that many newspapers talked about our building dedication ceremony."

Gun-Ho said while scanning through the newspaper clippings.

"The economic newspaper and all local newspapers placed articles about it."

"Can you show this to Director Dong-Chan Kim when he comes here?"

"Of course, sir. I will do that."

The general affairs director entered Gun-Ho's office.

"I've talked to the assistant managers with the accounting team and the general affairs team, and asked if they are interested in working for Dyeon Korea?"

"What did they say?"

"The accounting team's assistant manager is willing to be relocated to Dyeon Korea while the general affairs team's assistant manager seemed to be baffled when he heard my suggestion since he is living in Dujeong Town. Moreover, the

accounting assistant manager can expect to be promoted as she moves to the newly opened joint venture while the general affairs assistant manager couldn't because he was already promoted not long ago. What do you think of the team leader in the general affairs team? He is competent and he wants to work in Asan City since he is living in a town nearby— Baebang Town. He has been in the same position for four years now, so I think it would be good for us to send him to Dyeon Korea as we promote him."

"Please bring me the employee records of the accounting assistant manager and the team leader of the general affairs team."

"Yes, sir."

The general affairs director brought the employee records of the two workers.

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho didn't find anything that could be a red flag by sending them to Dyeon Korea.

"Okay. Let's relocate them to Dyeon Korea and promote them with one position up."

"Yes, sir."

Once the general affairs director left the office, Gun-Ho made a call to President Jeong-Sook Shin in GH Media.

"Do you currently have a lot of translation work?"

"Not really. The translation work for all thirty books of world history cartoon has been completed."

"Mr. Lee, who is doing the interpreting work for us right now, didn't work on those books, right?"

"No. These are cartoon books which are easy to translate. I had several graduate students work with cartoons."

"I'm thinking of hiring Mr. Lee as a contractor to continue to do the interpreting

work for Dyeon Korea. He seems to be a good fit for the job. I just want to make sure that you are okay with it since he is one of your translators with GH Media."

"Mr. Lee would love to do the job. Translation work with GH Media is not a stable job. We can't provide him a constant workload."

"If you happen to need a person who could talk with agencies in other countries for you, you can ask Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh in GH Building, Sinsa Town. I'm sure she has spare time to help you with the work since I haven't been to the office there for a while now."

"Understood, sir. If you could let her know in advance that she needs to work with me sometimes, that will be very helpful. I actually have several letters which I need to send to Amazon.com. They, of course, need to be translated into English."

"Okay, will do."

Gun-Ho then made a call to the secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh.

"It's me."

"Yes, sir."

"President Jeong-Sook Shin from GH Media will give you a call soon. I want you to help her with her work."

"Of course, sir."

In the afternoon, Gun-Ho headed to Dyeon Korea in Asan City.

Gun-Ho's office was already finished with high-end furniture and supplies. It looked more luxurious than the office in Jiksan Town.

"Sir, you are here."

Director Dong-Chan Kim brought a report to Gun-Ho's office.

"I need your approval on a cash advance request for the trip to Busan City."

"Did we already receive all the equipment to the Busan port?"

"Yes, I just received a call from the customs office. Also, the agent from the customs compliance service provider contacted me for it as well. I will go to Busan City with Mr. Adam Castler tomorrow. I'd also like to take Director Jong-Suk Park with me."

"Director Jong-Suk Park? You have two researchers who just joined you from GH Mobile. Why don't you take them with you instead of Director Park?"

"We will need to load the equipment and we might have to dismantle some of them, so we will need Director Park. The researchers are good at working in a research center. We need someone who has been handling machines in a production field."

"Okay. Do what you need to do."

Gun-Ho opened the file that Director Kim handed to him. There was a request form for the cash advance on the travel expenses."

"Oh, you are using the GH Mobile's request form."

"Yes, sir. We are currently using GH Mobile's forms for now. Once we have enough employees, we will change them to Dyeon Korea's forms."

"Are you carrying the business credit card with you?"

"Yes, sir. I have the company credit card with me. I am requesting for cash advance in case we need to use cash and that I wouldn't be able to withdraw cash from the credit card. It happened before."

Gun-Ho said while signing the request form,

"Two more workers from GH Mobile will join Dyeon Korea soon. They are the assistant manager from the accounting team and the team leader from the general affairs team."

"That's really good to hear it, sir. We need more workers as soon as possible. If they could join us tomorrow, that will be great."

"I will ask the general affairs director in GH Mobile if he could send them tomorrow."

"And about Director Yoon who has been in charge of the construction. Since the construction is completed, I think he can permanently take a position with Dyeon Korea rather than going back to GH Mobile in Jiksan Town. He can do management work here. Since I won't be around a lot in the office because of the nature of my sales work, I think we need an executive who can stay in the office and do a management job. He does have corresponding work experience. I think he will do great in managing accounting and general affairs. In addition, since he can speak English, Mr. Adam Castler will be happy to have him around."

"Hmm."

"I've been talking to Mr. Castler about our need to have someone who would do the management work, especially in accounting and general affairs. Since Mr. Castler had previously worked for another joint venture, he agreed to my concern."

"Hmm. Well, I will talk with President Jang-Hwan Song about it."

"I will be leaving for Busan tomorrow, sir. I will inform Director Park about the trip. I will tell him that you approved this trip to Busan."

"Oh, I was going to talk to you about our interpreter— Mr. Lee. What do you think about having him here as a contractor for now? And if we like him then we can convert his position to an employee."

"That sounds great. What position are you thinking about, sir?"

"What about a manager?"

"That's a good idea, sir. Thank you."

305 Joint Venture 1 – Part 2

The three workers were standing at the Busan port the next day. They verified two machines and 50 tons of raw materials which Dyeon America shipped from Seattle in the U.S. When they received the machines and the raw materials which pass muster at customs, Mr. Adam Castler received a call from Dyeon America. The call was about three of Dyeon America's engineers who were coming to join Dyeon Korea for a period of three months. Director Dong-Chan Kim made a call to Gun-Ho.

"Sir, it's Director Kim."

"Oh, yes. How are things going there?"

"We received the machines and raw materials without any problem. We are trying to load the truck with them. The machines are too long to be loaded to a truck, so Director Park is dismantling the machines right now."

"Oh, really?"

"And, Mr. Adam Castler just received a call from Seattle. They sent their three engineers to Korea and the engineers will arrive at Incheon International Airport tomorrow morning. They are asking if we can send someone to pick them up at the airport."

"I will ask Director Kang in Seoul to pick them up."

"Thank you, sir. We will be heading to Asan City as soon as we load things here."

Gun-Ho asked for the general affairs assistant manager who was just promoted to that position,

"We will have three engineers from Dyeon America tomorrow. They will arrive at the Incheon International Airport. Since they will arrive here in Asan City tomorrow afternoon, please make a room reservation at a hotel for them, and once Director Kim comes back from Busan, discuss with him about the

American engineers' OneRooms where they will stay for three months."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then called GH Development to talk to Director Kang.

"Director Kang?"

"Yes, sir."

"Three of Dyeon's engineers will arrive at Incheon International Airport tomorrow from the U.S."

"Oh, I see. I can pick them at the airport just like I did last time."

"Please take Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh with you. Let me see... Your car is probably too small to accommodate five people; especially the American engineers must have large body frames. Why don't you call a car rental company and ask if they have a van like Starex?"

"Okay, sir."

"You know how to drive a van, right?"

"Of course, sir. I can handle a van."

"Well, then get a van before you leave to pick them up."

"Yes, sir."

GH Media sent the third and fourth books of the cartoon series of world history to Gun-Ho.

"Well, once I receive all of their thirty books, my bookshelf here will be filled with cartoon books. Hmm. I'm not sure if I want to display cartoon books in my office since this is the president's office. Maybe I'd better send them to someone once I finish reading them. Who would be a good person to send them to? Oh, yeah. I can send the cartoon books to Jeong-Ah to Incheon City."

Jae-Sik Moon crossed his mind while Gun-Ho was reading the cartoon, and he gave him a call.

"Jae-Sik? I received the third and fourth books of the cartoon. Are they selling well?"

"Yes, they are doing very well. We are already selling the third edition of the first and second books. And we sell more than 100 books per day for the third and fourth ones."

"I guess you can make enough living with it."

"The Japanese book, 'the person who wakes up in the morning' is doing very well too. We sell at least 200 of them per day. You know, Korean people are sensitive to trends. I guess that book is trendy now."

"200 books per day? Let me think. Assuming the book costs 10,000 won, then the book brings 2 million won per day. It's 60 million won per month. Well, since GH Media has only five workers, I guess you can't just have meals with it but you can also get some drinks with it."

"Not really. You need to take account of the necessary expenses. We are paying fees to the large bookstores like Kyobo Book Center and Youngpoong Bookstore. Also, we are paying to the author, and we are bearing the shipping costs. So nothing much left for us in the end. But according to President Shin, if we maintain the current level for one year, we would be able to get your investment fund back to you."

"Hey, Min-Hyeok's wedding is this Saturday. Maybe we can get together after his wedding for another round of drink or something."

"Why not? I'm sure everyone will join us, especially, we will be in Incheon, our hometown."

"You said, you are seeing your ex-wife, right?"

"Yes. She actually moved into my home already."

"Really? Congratulations. Why didn't you tell me?"

"Well, it's not something I'm proud of."

"Why don't you have a wedding too? Min-Hyeok is having his second wedding."

You can have your first wedding now."

"Nah. It's okay. We can just live together as we have before."

"Do you talk with your parents sometimes?"

"It has been a while actually. I think I will need to go see them."

"Do you know where they are living?"

"Yes, I do."

"They will be happy to see you, man. I understand you should have your own reasons why you haven't seen your parents, but they are your parents."

"I know."

"Okay then. I will see you at Min-Hyeok's wedding."

Gun-Ho talked with President Jang-Hwan Song about Director Yoon who had been in charge of the construction of Dyeon Korea.

"I think we'd better give a permanent position to Director Yoon with Dyeon Korea."

"Director Yoon?"

"Yes."

"Actually I was thinking that we have way too many executives here in GH Mobile. We had construction work going on, so we needed them. But, with our current sales revenue, I think we can afford to have only five executives in GH Mobile."

"If we send Director Yoon to Dyeon Korea, we still have six executives with GH Mobile."

"The average annual salary for our executives is 150 million won. So if we let one person go, we can save 150 million won per year, assuming we are maintaining the same level of our sales revenue. I'm saying we can reduce our debt by 150 million won. I know I am the last executive who joined GH Mobile."

If our sales revenue didn't increase, I would have had to be the one who gets laid off first."

"Haha. I can't let you go, President Song."

"You shouldn't involve your emotion in the business. You need to see the person's work performance."

"Haha. I see your point."

"This company is generating more and more revenue and in the process of reducing debts. After three years, we can possibly go public too. However, you shouldn't expect to make money with Dyeon Korea in its first year."

"Hmmm."

"But you will have your fun with Dyeon Korea. While GH Mobile is slowly but gradually increasing its sales revenue, Dyeon Korea can increase the sale revenue dramatically. There is a distinctive difference between a company that is manufacturing products and the company that is producing raw materials."

"Are you saying that if we are lucky enough, maybe we will make money even in our first year?"

"That's right."

"Hmm. I see. Well, I will relocate Director Yoon to Dyeon Korea for now."

"Sounds good. Oh, I will have to get off from work early today."

"Are you going to Seoul?"

"The new minister who is just appointed is my friend. I have a party with my friends to congratulate him."

"Oh, the minister who used to work as a congressman?"

"Yes. When we were in college at Korea University, we used to do protest together."

"You probably want to keep a close relationship with him. It seems that he will

gain a lot of political power in our current administration."

"With all due respect, I beg to differ. I believe that a businessman shouldn't have a close or distant relationship with politicians and high-ranking government officials. I will keep an adequate and proper distance from them."

"Hmm. I will keep that in mind."

"Thank you."

President Jang-Hwang Song gave a bow to Gun-Ho respectfully and left the office.

306 Joint Venture 2 – Part 1

After receiving a call that the eighteen-wheeler with the machines and raw materials in it just passed Chupungyeong (a mountain pass), Gun-Ho called for Director Yoon.

"The eighteen-wheeler just passed Chupungyeong."

"Okay, sir. I will prepare immediately a 30-ton forklift, a jib crane and a freight lift elevator."

Director Yoon was now working for Dyeon Korea as a director who was in charge of general management. Since he was an executive officer, he had his own office. Gun-Ho wanted to make sure that everything was ready to handle the necessary moving and installation when the machines arrived, so he asked Director Yoon again,

"The eighteen-wheeler that left Busan City will arrive here around 12 o'clock. You sure we will have everything including the forklift truck ready by then, right?"

"Yes, don't worry about it, sir. Once the machines arrive, we will move them to the production worksite with the forklift truck."

"Hmm."

"Once we put the machines in their place that we prepared for them, we will need to connect them to the power and cooling system before we could test them."

"Hmm."

"Also, we are expecting to receive 50 tons of raw materials. In order to efficiently store them in our storage, I think we need to install maybe a three-tier shelf in metal. I believe that Director Jong-Suk Park is the best person who I can discuss it in details. I will talk to him about it."

"Are you saying that you want to store the raw materials on a shelf?"

"I think that's the best way to store them. We might need more shelves later once we pick up speed in our business. We now start with 50 tons of raw materials, but later we will possibly handle hundreds of tons of raw materials constantly."

"Does that mean we will have to pick up the raw materials at the customs in Busan City every time we receive the shipment?"

"No, sir. We sent our three employees to Busan City this time because we will have to move the equipment, but for raw materials only, the customs compliance service provider can handle them for us."

"Busan City is too far from our factory. Can we receive the shipment at Pyeongtaek Port instead?"

"I believe we can receive raw materials at Pyeongtaek Port, if not for the machines. I think Mr. Adam Castler will have to talk with Dyeon America to arrange the location though."

"Hmm..."

"It's windy and the level of Asian Dust is high today. I think you'd better stay in the office, sir. Once the shipment arrives, we will take care of it."

"Hmm. Hmm."

Gun-Ho cleared his throat and went back to his office in Dyeon Korea, and started reading the cartoon book which GH Media had sent to him the other day. His office was cozy even on a windy day. A lot of natural light was coming into the office. The office was filled with the orchid plants that GH Mobile's customer and vendor companies sent to congratulate on the new factory construction, and the flowers were giving off pleasant scents. Gun-Ho enjoyed the moment where he was reading a cartoon book in his large office that was filled with orchid flower scents.

Gun-Ho fell asleep while reading the cartoon book, and he woke up to some loud noise. When Gun-Ho heard people yelling, he walked to the window and looked down. An eighteen-wheeler was in the factory yard and a huge forklift truck was moving busily with Jong-Suk's scream.

"Hey, Mr. Driver! More to your left! More and more. Sh*t! You almost hit the

wall! Manager Park! Don't touch that!"

They were making a lot of noise. Gun-Ho could hear all sorts of sound from the forklift truck, freight lift elevator and some other noise from machines and tools.

Gun-Ho walked down to the factory. When the three workers who just came back from Busan saw Gun-Ho entering the area, they walked towards Gun-Ho to greet him,

"Welcome back, folks. The equipment looks great."

Gun-Ho looked at his watch. It was after lunchtime, around 1 pm already.

"Why don't you have lunch first?"

"We will eat our lunch after unloading the shipment, sir."

Director Kim asked for the assistant manager.

"Hey, Mr. Park, let's place an order of our lunch for delivery. I think Jajjangmyeon* will do fine."

"For everyone here, sir? I think we have about twenty people."

"Let them choose from Jajjangmyeon*, Jjamppong*, and fried rice. If you go to the container office, you will find the phone number of a restaurant that you can order those foods from. The number is attached to the wall."

"Yes, sir."

The assistant manager moved around quickly among the twenty workers to take their lunch orders.

"Mr. Park, I will have Jajjangmyeon*."

Gun-Ho shouted to the assistant manager,

"Are you having lunch with us here, sir?"

"Of course."

Gun-Ho sat with his employees, together with the truck drivers and had his Jajjangmyeon*.

When the workers had almost finished their lunch, the assistant manager distributed coffee in a paper cup to everyone there. The coffees were from the vending machine in the container office.

The assistant manager seemed to be feeling good and excited since he was recently promoted to his current position. He was three years younger than Gun-Ho, and Gun-Ho sometimes found himself treating the assistant manager in an informal and comfortable way.

"Sir, why don't you go back to your office and take a rest. The worksite is too noisy and not very organized yet."

As Director Kim suggested Gun-Ho, Gun-Ho went back to his office on the second floor after lunch, and he continued to read the cartoon book for a while. Once he finished the book, he came back to the worksite to see how things were going.

"The forklift truck driver already left?"

"Yes, sir. He left at about 3 pm. The driver for the freight lift elevator left right after he finished his Jajjangmyeon*."

Dyeon Korea hadn't purchased its own forklift truck yet. If they had to buy one, a 5-ton forklift truck should be large enough to handle their raw materials. This time, they leased the huge 30-ton forklift truck to move the machines they received from Dyeon America.

When Gun-Ho looked around, he saw Jong-Suk who was taking a break. He was holding a paper cup of coffee and he was smoking a cigarette while standing near the fence.

"Director Park, you did a great work today."

"It's part of my job."

"Are you coming back here to work tomorrow?"

"Director Kim asked me to come here tomorrow. The people in our factory in Jiksan Town wouldn't like it though."

"Why don't you work in the Jiksan location in the morning and come to this Asan location in the afternoon? That's what I do these days."

"I don't know."

While Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk were conversing about the work arrangement, a Starex van entered the factory gate, and three American men got off from the van. They were the engineers from Dyeon America. Manager Kang picked them up at the airport that morning. Once they got off from the van, they went straight into the office building without noticing that Gun-Ho was standing in the yard.

"Bro, I guess you'd better go back to your office. The American engineers have arrived."

"It's okay. Director Kim and Mr. Adam Castler are in the office."

"I want to talk to them before we start installing the equipment."

"Do it tomorrow. Those engineers must feel very exhausted after the long-hour flight."

Note*

Jajjangmyeon— Korean-style Chinese noodle dish with black bean sauce, vegetables, and diced pork.

Jjamppong— Korean spicy noodle soup with seafood, pork, and vegetables.

307 Joint Venture 2 – Part 2

Gun-Ho was walking up to the second floor heading to his office when he ran into the assistant manager from the general affairs team.

"Mr. Park, can you come to my office now?"

"Yes, sir."

The assistant manager followed Gun-Ho to the president's office.

"I saw you running around earlier to serve coffee to the workers. I think we need to hire a new worker for that sort of job. Since you have been working in the general affairs department, you probably handled Four Major Public Insurance before. Am I right?"

"Yes, sir. I was actually in charge of handling Four Major Public Insurance."

"Great. Why don't you then file Four Major Public Insurance for the workers here in Dyeon Korea?"

"We've already done it, sir, while we were still in the Jiksan location, right before we moved to Dyeon Korea."

"Hmm. That's good. Then, create an account with WorkNet with the name of Dyeon Korea and hire one female worker."

"What position are we posting?"

"We need an office assistant for the general affairs team who can provide support to other workers in the team with word processing skills. We prefer someone who is from this area—

Asan City, and I want her to take care of the coffee vending machine as well."

"Director Kim mentioned the other day that a government officer who attended our building dedication ceremony left a resume with him. He said it was for his sister-in-law who is looking for a job."

"Really? Then bring me her resume; I will review it."

While Gun-Ho was talking with the assistant manager, Mr. Adam Castler entered Gun-Ho's office with three American engineers. The interpreter was following them to the office.

"These are the engineers from Dyeon America. They will work with us for the next three months."

"Nice to meet you."

Gun-Ho stood up from his seat and offered his hand to each engineer for a handshake.

"We look forward to working with you all. I'm hoping that you could teach our engineers your advanced technology during your stay with us, so we could produce the same quality of products here in this location as the ones from Dyeon America. Mr. Lee, please interpret this for me."

The interpreter— Mr. Lee immediately interpreted what Gun-Ho just said to the three Dyeon American engineers.

"Okay."

The engineers kept nodding their heads and saying "okay" as they were listening to the interpretation.

"I understand that you might encounter some difficulties during your stay in Korea due to the cultural difference, language barrier, different food, and weather. We are here to help you, so please do not hesitate to let us know if you need any help."

The three American engineers were standing there with no facial expression on their faces while Gun-Ho was speaking in Korean, and once the interpreter started relaying the message in English, they nodded their heads and said "okay" several times.

Once the engineers from Dyeon American left the office, Director Kim and the assistant manager from the general affairs team came into the office. Director Kim was carrying a resume in his left hand.

"Sir, this is the resume that one of the government officers left with me on the day of our building dedication ceremony. I was going to show it to you after the shipment arrived safely."

"Do you think she will be a good fit for our company?"

"She doesn't have any work experience, but her qualification is not bad. She graduated from a decent college as well. She is good-looking too. I can tell by looking at her picture attached to her resume."

"Which government officer asked you for it?"

Director Kim came close to Gun-Ho and whispered into his ear.

"She is xxx officer's wife's sister."

"Hmm... Even though he asked for this, if she is not qualified, we don't have to hire her, but as long as she has the right qualifications, we will employ her."

"Understood, sir. I think we can establish a good connection with the local community through this government officer by doing him a favor. His sister-in-law is a decent candidate for the job. She studied English in the U.S. for a year and she retains a high TOEIC score."

"Okay. Director Kim, why don't you give her an interview? And hire her if you think she is the right person for the job."

"Understood, sir."

"Okay. You can go back to work then."

"I have one more thing to talk to you about, sir."

"What is it?"

"It's about the English class we are having every morning in GH Mobile."

"Oh, the class held by the native English speaker from Hoseo University?"

"Yes, sir. When we started the class, we had about 50 workers who attended the class every morning since you strongly encouraged them to take the class."

"That sounds right."

"And the number of participants had gradually reduced as time went. It became 30 people, and then dropped to 20, and now we have about only two or three people attending the class. I think the workers don't keep up with the English class because we don't really feel a need to use English at work."

"Hmm."

"However, it's different in Dyeon Korea. Since we are a joint venture company with an American company, we can't avoid being exposed to the English language at work."

"That's why you—Director Kim joined Dyeon Korea. You served your military service in Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA)."

"Oh, that was thirty years ago, sir. Speaking of which, I was thinking that maybe it is a good idea to bring that native English speaking teacher to Dyeon Korea and teach the English class here."

"Hmmm. I see your point. I will think about it."

"It's a waste to pay the teacher to teach only two or three people in GH Mobile. If that English native speaking teacher from Hoseo University teaches English here, I am willing to attend the class every morning myself."

"I heard you, Director Kim. I will think about it."

The next morning, after giving a cursory review of the reports in GH Mobile, Gun-Ho headed to Dyeon Korea.

"GH Mobile should be doing fine without me. President Song is a meticulous man and I'm sure he will take good care of it."

When Gun-Ho entered the production worksite of Dyeon Korea, he saw Jong-Suk doing oxygen-acetylene welding. He was wearing black welding goggles. The welding was producing visible smoke and flames. Jong-Suk was surrounded by the three engineers from Dyeon America, the interpreter, and two researchers who joined from GH Mobile. They were watching Jong-Suk doing the welding. Jong-Suk was mumbling while working,

"Sh*t. I'm the only one working here!"

No one said a word in response to Jong-Suk's mumble. When they saw Gun-Ho coming into the area, they all greeted him, except Jong-Suk. Jong-Suk didn't notice Gun-Ho and continued to do the welding.

"Sh*t. Sh*t. Those men were sent here to do the engineering work, and I am the only one who was doing all the work here while they just watch me working. Something doesn't feel right. I am the one who is supposed to watch them working. Sh*t."

The interpreter—Mr. Lee who understood what Jong-Suk said laughed but he didn't interpret what Jong-Suk said. Gun-Ho responded to Jong-Suk's mumble instead,

"Hey, these engineers are the engineers in the chemical field for compound products. They are not mechanics like you."

Jong-Suk took off the safety goggles when he heard Gun-Ho's voice.

"Huh? Bro! Oh, I mean sir. You are here!"

"Why are you cutting it?"

"We are installing the machines here, and this part is too long, so we need to cut this part off."

"I see. Well, keep up the good work. It seems you are the only one who could do the work."

308 Joint Venture 3 – Part 1

Gun-Ho received a call from Director Kang from GH Development.

"Sir, it's Director Kang."

"Oh, Director Kang. Thank you for picking up those American engineers at the airport and driving them to Asan City yesterday."

"Sure thing, sir. I should, of course, give any support that I could to any GH companies. I called because I have something that I need to discuss with you, sir. We have received a letter from Seoul City Hall. They said if we make our building's rooftop green like a garden or something, they will subsidize the cost by about 50%. Also, they are willing to pay for the service fee charged by the county office for their security inspection. I'm wondering if we want to apply for it."

"Have the papers ready. I'm coming to Seoul for another business anyway. I will stop by the office."

"Sounds good, sir. I will be here."

It had been a while since Gun-Ho went to his building in Sinsa Town. It seemed that a new security guard was working on the day Gun-Ho visited the building. The security guard didn't recognize Gun-Ho.

"I like this way better. Since he doesn't recognize me, I don't need to be bothered in taking the elevator to my office."

Gun-Ho headed to his office on the eighteenth floor. When he opened the door, the workers in the office were all surprised and quickly stood up from their seats.

When he entered his office, some fund transfer slips were piled up on his desk waiting for his review and signature. Gun-Ho spent about an hour to review and sign the papers.

"Director Kang, please bring me the letter you received from the city hall the other day."

Director Kang brought the letter to Gun-Ho.

"Hmm. Is it necessary to build a garden on our rooftop?"

"Well, the tenants in our building will definitely like it. It will provide a pleasant resting area, and it can also deter some undesirable activities going on in the building. For example, many young people in the building smoke around the emergency exit. We can't prevent them from doing so since they are free to do so, but the problem is that many of them just tossed the cigarette butts on the ground after smoking."

"Hmm."

"Many of those cigarette butts are not properly extinguished, and they could cause a fire. Some of those people even toss the cigarette butts in the air and let them land on the street. We need something to restrain those activities."

"So we want to make a garden or even a small park on the rooftop, so the smokers would smoke cigarettes there instead of somewhere inside the building."

"That's right."

"Let's go see the rooftop now."

"Sure, sir."

Director Kang picked up the key to the rooftop and started walking in front of Gun-Ho.

The metal door leading to the rooftop was locked and there was a sign on the door, saying, "Staff Only." Once Director Kang opened the door, Gun-Ho could see a huge ventilator with all sorts of junk. Most of them were the leftover materials from the building renovation, such as pieces of timber and Styrofoam.

"I think we can move the ventilator and the power system up, in order to secure more space for the park project. One of the project managers of a construction company visited here the other day, and he said we can have about 150 pyung large park here without getting rid of that ventilator and power system."

"150 pyung..."

"We can even build a small space for business here like 30 pyung large and rent it out for a small bar business or something. We can still have a 120 pyung large park."

"Did we get a price quote for the work?"

"Making a building rooftop green usually costs from 500,000 to 600,000 won per pyung. If we want to make it more luxurious with a nice tree or by raising the wall to block the strong wind, then it will cost more."

"If so, let's say that it costs 100 million won to make the green rooftop that we want, then Seoul City will subsidize 50 million won since that's the 50% of what we spend, right?"

"That's correct. The subsidy includes the safety inspection fee and cost to waterproof."

"Hmmm. Well, we still have to spend half of the construction price."

"I think that building a small space on the rooftop for a small bar and renting it out is a good idea. After about three years of renting it, I believe we will be able to recover the cost of the entire rooftop construction."

"What is the floor space here?"

"It's 270 pyung, sir. And the building to land ratio applicable to our building is 80%."

"Hmm. I see. I will review it."

Gun-Ho had lunch with Director Kang at a restaurant nearby Garosugil Road that day, and he came back to Asan City.

Gun-Ho went to the joint venture company in Asan City to see how things were going there.

All machines and equipment were installed, and Director Park was connecting the power and cooling system to them. The production manager stood up and

greeted Gun-Ho when he saw Gun-Ho coming into the production field.

"The machines seem to be all in place."

"We will test the entire production line tomorrow."

"I know we received the raw materials already. What about chemical materials? Are they ready?"

"Yes, sir. We now have 50 different chemicals in our storage."

"Once the American engineers from Dyeon America start working on the compound, you will have to take a very good look at them. That's the key to our business."

"I will keep that in mind, sir."

"Especially, make sure that you take note of the ratio of the compounds."

"Yes, sir."

Gun-Ho then walked up to the second floor where his office was located.

When Director Yoon was told that Gun-Ho was in his office, he came to Gun-Ho's office, carrying the report and papers to be signed with him.

"How are you doing, Director Yoon? I know you used to work outside in the construction field. How is the work in the office?"

"I like it. It's fun."

"That's good to hear. Are those engineers from Dyeon America still staying in a hotel?"

"No, sir. They already moved to a OneRoom. They are staying in the same building as Mr. Adam Castler."

"Was the owner okay with the short-term lease? They will only stay there for three months."

"Yes, since those OneRooms were vacant anyway, he didn't mind renting them

for a few months. Moreover, he liked the fact that the tenants are high-level engineers from U.S., rather than blue-collar foreign labor workers."

"I see. Well, please make sure to pay the rent on time. A landlord's worst nightmare is receiving the rent not on time."

"Understood, sir. And, I have something to suggest, sir."

"What is it?"

"Director Kim is currently giving a ride to the vice president—Mr. Adam Castler—in commuting. Also, the other three engineers are commuting with the general affairs assistant manager. Our company provides them with the cost of gas, but once we get busy, this current commuting setting will become burdensome. I think that we'd better purchase a company car and hire a chauffeur."

"Hmm."

"Once we have a chauffeur working for our company, he can be very helpful for you, sir. We all think you drive too much, sir. You are coming back and forth between the factory in Jiksan Town and here in Asan City, and we think you need a chauffeur to drive for you. Since you are young, sir, you might not think it's necessary, but many business owners who have smaller companies than yours have a chauffeur, so they could conserve their energy for the actual business operation work."

"Hmm."

"Sometimes, Director Kim comes to work to only pick up Mr. Adam Castler after meeting with a client somewhere else. If he didn't have to give a ride to Mr. Castler, he would have just gone home for the day after the meeting. So, I sometimes give a ride to Mr. Adam Castler for Director Kim."

"Let's think about hiring a chauffeur. For now, let's rent a car for three months. Let's ask the car rental company to send us a chauffeur as well, who can speak English if possible. As to the car, ask Mr. Adam Castler to choose from Grandeur K7 or SM7."

"Yes, sir."

309 Joint Venture 3 – Part 2

"I will make an arrangement to use one rental car for Mr. Adam Castler and three other engineers from Dyeon America for the commute. Also, I will make sure that the car won't be used by anyone else other than you or the Americans from Dyeon America."

"Sounds good."

"And about the researchers, who are now working in the production field in Dyeon Korea, they have received training from Dyeon America in U.S., but since they are accustomed to a research center setting, they are having some difficulties in working in the production field. So, Director Jong-Suk Park often comes to our factory, and he is helping them a lot. The problem is that I was told that GH Mobile hates this arrangement. They are bluntly expressing their concern and disapproval of it."

"Hmm."

"So, I was thinking that maybe we can hire a factory worker who can do maintenance work with the machines in the production field and also hire one more worker who has work experience to a certain level to have as the team leader."

"Okay. Post those two job postings on WorkNet."

"Thank you, sir. I will try to select young workers with competence at work."

"And..."

"You have more things to suggest, Director Yoon? I guess you came all prepared today, huh?"

"Director Kim and I had an interview with the female candidate who Director Kim talked to you about the other day. You know, the one who was recommended by the government official."

"Oh, yes, I remember that. How is she?"

"I was actually skeptical at first since she was a relative of a government official, and she didn't apply for the position through our regular hiring process. However, it turns out that she is not bad at all. She is good-looking, and she speaks English as well."

"That's good. Then let's hire her."

"I thought it would be better if you see her before we finalize her employment, so I asked her to come here again today. I think she is probably in my office already."

"Do I have to see her? Because you, Director Yoon and Director Kim found her a good fit for the position, then she should be good."

"Well, still, she will work closely with you in serving you with tea and stuff. I think you'd better meet her to make sure we all like her."

"Hmm."

"You will find her a good fit because she is calm and quiet. It seems that she was raised in a good family. Her sister is the wife of a government official, and her father is now retired, but he used to work as a high-ranking government official as well. They are locals from Asan City."

"Hmm. Her sister is the spouse of a government official, and that makes her not very young. I guess there must be a big age gap between the two sisters."

"According to Director Kim, her parents wanted to have a son. Their first child was a girl, so they tried again but ended up having another daughter."

"I see. Her parents must be old people with old beliefs."

"I will check to see if she is here, and I will bring her here."

"Sounds good."

After a while, a young female who looked like in her mid-20s came into Gun-Ho's office. Her hands were folded in front of her, which showed her respect for Gun-Ho and also her nervousness.

"What is your name?"

"I'm Seon-Hye Yee, sir."

"Are you living in Asan City?"

"Yes, sir. I'm living with my parents."

Gun-Ho didn't even bother asking her about her academic degree or previous work experience.

"This is a start-up company of a joint venture. We are still in the process of arranging things before we could open our business. We don't have many female workers and the location is not very convenient to commute. Do you think you can handle all these?"

"I will do my best, sir."

Gun-Ho looked at her carefully. She was definitely the calm and stable type, and she was also elegant.

"Well, I look forward to working with you."

Gun-Ho said with a smile.

"Thank you, sir."

Ms. Seon-Hye Yee gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho before walking out of the office.

After the new female worker left the office, Gun-Ho made a call to President Jeong-Sook Shin at GH Media.

"Yes, sir. This is Jeong-Sook Shin."

"Is a book café a good business nowadays?"

"A book café, sir?"

"Yes, I've seen a lot of articles and news about it these days, especially on the Internet. There are many uniquely decorated book cafes."

"Well, I'm not sure, sir. It's one of the trendy businesses, and I'm not sure if it will bring good money. I guess the specific business requires the owner to really like books. Those sorts of business are not just about making money."

"Have you visited GH Building before?"

"Yes, I went there once. The location is really good."

"I'm going to make its rooftop green like a good resting area. The one on the twentieth floor."

"Oh, I see."

"Do you think it would be a good idea to open a book café there? With the name of GH Media?"

"A book café in GH Building?"

"Right."

"If the book café uses our name—GH Media—then do we operate the café?"

"That's right."

"I don't know. I can't really tell anything at this point. I think I need to see it first."

"When you have time, please visit the building and go to the rooftop. I will let Director Kang know that you will come by to visit soon. He will open the door to the rooftop for you."

"Is Director Kang managing the building now?"

"Yes. We have our GH Development office on the eighteenth floor."

"I see. I will go there tomorrow."

The new female worker—Ms. Seon-Hye Yee—entered Gun-Ho's office. She brought a cup of hot green tea. When she placed the tea on the table she slipped and spilled the tea. She must have been very nervous on her first day of work. Some of the green tea spattered on Gun-Ho's face.

"Holy sh*t!"

Gun-Ho jumped out of his chair in surprise.

Ms. Seon-Hye Yee seemed to be mortified and started wiping out the tea on the table with her silk handkerchief.

Gun-Ho said with a smile,

"It's okay. Don't use your handkerchief. We have a towel in the office."

"I'm so sorry, sir."

"It's okay. Today is your first day of work. You must be nervous. You will talk about this day as one of the fun days in your life in the future."

Ms. Seon-Hye seemed to be still terrified and quickly walked out of the office, and she came back with a towel. She started wiping out the table with the towel.

"It's clean enough, Ms. Yee. The rest of the tea will be dried out as time goes. Why don't you bring me another cup of hot green tea?"

Ms. Seon-Hye Yee prepared another green tea and came back to the office. This time, she was extremely careful while putting down the cup of green tea on Gun-Ho's table.

Gun-Ho laughed, and Ms. Seon-Hye Yee laughed along with him.

Once Ms. Seon-Hye Yee left the office, Gun-Ho mumbled to himself.

"Well, I guess it is indeed her very first day of work in her entire life. She seems very innocent and naïve."

310 Joint Venture 4 – Part 1

President Jeong-Sook Shin from GH Media called Gun-Ho after she had visited the GH Building in Sinsa Town.

"So, what do you think?"

"I love the view from the rooftop. I could see the entire Sinsa Town and Apgujeong Town in Gangnam District. But I'm not sure if we can make a successful book café there."

"Then what business do you think I should open there?"

"I think a small bar will do. But I don't think it is a good idea to open a bar with GH's name."

"Maybe I should rent it out to someone, or just use it for a resting area for the tenants."

"I am rather interested in the space in the first basement level."

"The basement level? There used to be a sauna before they closed the business. It is now vacant."

"That's right. Your building occupies the basement from level two to level five as a parking space, and the first basement was used as a sauna before, and they opened it 24 hours."

"That's correct."

"The 24-hour sauna was a trend for a while, and now it is no longer popular at all. That's why the previous sauna business that used the basement space closed their doors. They had probably not been able to pay the rent with their low and reduced revenues."

"What's on your mind? What business do you think would be good to use in that space? I was told by Director Kang that someone had inquired about the rent price for that space the other day. He wanted to open a huge restaurant."

"Well, I think opening a restaurant there is not a bad idea. But I was thinking about opening a year-round art gallery."

"A year-round art gallery?"

"Yes. Once we redo the interior neatly and display arts, the building will start gaining a more luxurious and elegant image. Moreover, the building will draw more attention from the press and media since whenever we hold an art exhibition, they will write some articles about it. If things go well, the building can become a landmark of Sinsa Town."

"Hmm."

"However, you have to note that I am not a business person. I am just someone who loves books and who is selling books. It's just an idea since you asked."

"Well, I think that idea is certainly worth serious consideration. Let's revisit that idea after Min-Hyeok's wedding."

"Okay, sir."

Min-Hyeok's wedding day came.

It was held in a wedding hall located in Ramada Songdo Hotel, Incheon City. Min-Hyeok was standing at the entrance along with his parents and greeting the guests.

There were tons of guests coming for Min-Hyeok's wedding, maybe because they knew that Gun-Ho would come too. There were not many people on the bride's side, but because of the bride's exotic look, she drew enough attention from the guests.

"Look at her. The bride's mother is wearing a traditional Chinese dress—qipao."

"You're right. The bride's father looks like an artist. He has long hair pulled back in a ponytail. He also has a beard."

"I heard the bride is Chinese. Pity for the groom. I heard that in China, men do all the kitchen chores like washing dishes and cooking food."

The guests looked at the congratulatory flower wreaths that were standing along the wall near the entrance while talking about the bride and the groom.

There were so many of them and from so many people, such as GH Mobile's president—Gun-Ho Goo; Dyeon Korea's vice president—Adam Castler; GH Media's president—Jeong-Sook Shin; Jinxi Construction Company's president—Chinkkweo Seon from Kunshan City, China; the employees of GH Parts Company from Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province, China, and other vendor and customer companies. There were more than twenty congratulatory flower wreaths.

Gun-Ho was standing behind the column in the lobby after having a handshake with the groom—Min-Hyeok. Gun-Ho brought Mr. Adam Castler with him, who expressed his interest in watching a Korean wedding. He came along with President Jang-Hwan Song, Director Dong-Chan Kim, and Director Jong-Suk Park.

"Did you see Gun-Ho Goo?"

"Where is he?"

Gun-Ho's high school friends were looking for Gun-Ho. They wanted to use this occasion to get closer to Gun-Ho.

Jae-Sik Moon walked toward Gun-Ho.

"President Goo, are you joining us for a drink after the wedding?"

"Well, I don't know."

"Maybe today is not a good day to get together because many of us live too far from here, Incheon City."

"Did you tell everyone that we will have a drink after the wedding?"

"No, I didn't yet."

"We can get together later then. We can meet somewhere in Seoul."

President Jeong-Sook Shin came to Gun-Ho as well. Gun-Ho asked her,

"Have you met Mr. Ding Feng?"

"No, I haven't yet."

"Then come with me. Let's go and talk to Mr. Ding Feng. He probably feels lonely here. His relatives and friends are all in China and couldn't attend the wedding in Korea today. Jae-Sik, why don't you come with us, too?"

As Gun-Ho expected, when they walked to Mr. Ding Feng, he looked extremely happy to see them, who were not strangers to him like most of the guests there. Moreover, he could communicate with Gun-Ho in Chinese without any problem.

"Congratulations, sir."

"Thank you so much for coming today. I know it was too much to ask you to come to the same wedding twice. Honey, come and meet President Goo. He is the one who our son-in-law is working with."

Ding Feng's wife was wearing a qipao. She offered her hand to Gun-Ho with a broad smile.

"Congratulations, ma'am."

President Jeong-Sook Shin and the GH Media's chief editor—Jae-Sik Moon—also shook hands with Ding Feng and his wife.

"President Jeong-Sook Shin wants to discuss something with you, sir. When are you leaving for China?"

"We are planning to have a tour in Seoul before we leave the country. We are going to Namsan Tower and Gyeongbug Palace tomorrow. We will then leave for China the following day."

Gun-Ho interpreted what Mr. Ding Feng said for President Shin.

"Please tell him that I'd like to meet with him tomorrow at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art. It's located close to Gyeongbug Palace."

When Gun-Ho interpreted for Mr. Ding Feng, he looked very intrigued by the museum that President Song selected for a place to meet with him.

"Oh, there is an art museum of modern and contemporary art there? I will definitely be there."

Mr. Ding Feng, who was an artist, seemed to be extremely interested in seeing Korean arts.

The following day, Gun-Ho got up later than usual.

"I must have been tired after traveling to Incheon City for Min-Hyeok's wedding."

Gun-Ho looked at his watch. It was almost 9 am.

"I would have been more exhausted if I drove myself. It was a good decision to ride with Mr. Castler in the rental car."

Gun-Ho headed to his GH Mobile office without having breakfast.

There were not many papers piled up at his desk, which were waiting for his review and signature. That was because most of his daily work were now handled by President Jang-Hwan Song. Even the fund transfer slips were already reviewed and signed by President Song. Gun-Ho just needed to review the daily fund flow statements.

"I think I should delegate this daily fund flow statement review to President Song as well."

In order to let President Song take care of monitoring the daily fund flow, Gun-Ho had to hand over the OTP (One Time Password) card to him. Gun-Ho asked for President Song.

After a while, President Song came into Gun-Ho's office. He was carrying something that was wrapped in some newspapers.

"What is that?"

"It's the mold that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo made and sent to us from Japan."

311 Joint Venture 4 – Part 2

As President Song showed the mold that Mr. Sakata Ikuzo sent from Japan, Gun-Ho said,

"I wouldn't be able to tell whether it's well made or not even though it's in front of me."

"I think Mr. Sakata Ikuzo is an incredible engineer. His mold is carved roughly, but the products made with the mold are so perfect. Look at these."

President Song showed Gun-Ho an automobile part—a soft protector.

"Well, even in my layperson's eyes, the product looks beautiful."

"We are going to make 5,000 of these and send them to Changwon City tomorrow."

"Don't we need to send someone along with the products to Changwon City?"

"That wouldn't be necessary. We can just mail them through Kyoungdong Express. We just need to include our test results of the products."

"But this is the very first shipment to them. Wouldn't they mind? Maybe they would think we don't show enough care for the business with them."

"It's okay. I have known their sales manager, and their research center's chief officers for a long time. I had worked with them before."

President Song continued to talk,

"This is a new product to be used for the S Group's new model of a vehicle. They made the product order from us and also from Egnopak. That's how auto manufacturing companies do. They usually make product orders from two different companies for the same auto part."

"I am aware of that."

"They are doing so to prepare a situation where one of the supplying companies couldn't or refused to supply the auto parts. That way, they can continuously manufacture their cars without being affected by a supplying company's status."

"Do those kinds of situation really happen?"

"Actually, it happens a lot. Many auto parts supplying companies produce defective products, or they find their workers on strike. In those situations, the auto manufacturing companies cannot receive their necessary auto parts. If things go wrong, they wouldn't be able to produce their cars, and it could place them such as Hyundai or Kia in a very difficult and embarrassing position in the international market."

"Hmm."

"For this protector, S Group ordered 30% of their necessary quantities from us, and 70% of them went to Egnopak. If we do a good job and the situation helps us, maybe we would be able to take the current Egnopak's current position with 70% of the S Group's product quantities someday."

"How come did S Group order only 30% from us? And ordered 70% from Egnopak?"

"Well, 30% is a huge amount of products for us. Look at our factory. Egnopak has 3,000 employees while we have only 250. When their examiners visited our factory, they verified the factory's production capacity, including the number of workers, the number and the status of our machines, and the statistics on our previous year's defective products, and etc. So, given all this information, giving us 30% of their necessary quantity is very generous. As their needs increase and we hire more workers and expand our factory, the number of quantities of their order from us will increase accordingly."

"Hmm. I see. And here is the..."

"What is this?"

"It's an OTP card. You will need it when you deposit and withdraw funds to or from our major banks. I want you to handle it."

"Oh, no no. I don't want to yet. I will take it when this company is successfully

registered with KOSDAQ."

"President Song, you are a stubborn man."

"I was actually famous to be stubborn when I worked for S Group as a vice president. They called me Mr. Stubborn Song."

"Really? Haha. I guess then I have to lose this time."

"Well, if you don't have anything else, I will go back to work."

Gun-Ho then received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Hey, it's me. I just wanted to thank you for coming to my wedding twice, also for helping me to smoothly go through them."

"They were your weddings; what are you thanking me for? It's not like I paid for the expenses of your wedding ceremony."

"Well, you actually helped me a lot even financially. I wouldn't have been able to buy the condo in Juan Town for my parents without your help. We did the wallpaper of the condo and purchased some new furniture before my bride arrived. My wife and her parents were satisfied with what they saw."

"It was not even an expensive condo."

"They have no idea about various condo prices in different areas in Korea. They think our condo in Incheon City costs about the same as the condo in Mok Town, Seoul. What they see in a condo is its size and the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. They seemed to be happy when they learned our parents' home is 108 in Chinese measurement, and it has two bathrooms. My father-in-law actually disapproved of our marriage at first because he heard a lot of horrible stories about international marriage fraud. Now, he likes me better than his daughter according to my wife."

"Really?"

"Why wouldn't he? His son-in-law has a nice condo in Korea, and he has another luxurious condo in Chiwonhwawon condo complex in Suzhou City. He said he wouldn't have to worry about her daughter any longer."

"Haha. That must be a big relief."

"So, I am grateful for your help, Gun-Ho. Once I go back to work in China, I will put all my energy working for the company."

"Well, sounds good. Let's do our best."

After getting off the phone with Min-Hyeok, Gun-Ho walked out of the office and had his lunch. After having a meat soup, Gun-Ho headed to the office in Dyeon Korea.

When he arrived at Dyeon Korea in Asan City, Gun-Ho walked around the production worksite. All the machines seemed to be placed and installed, but they were not working yet. It seemed that Director Jong-Suk Park didn't come to Dyeon Korea that day.

"Where is everybody?"

At that moment, Gun-Ho heard some people talking in the compound room. When he approached the room, he saw a red sign on the door. It said "restricted area." Gun-Ho entered the room anyway. There were three American engineers, the production manager, the assistant manager working on mixing the materials. They were wearing some sort of gas mask.

"You are all here."

Those five workers greeted Gun-Ho when they saw him entering the room.

"We will produce our very first product tomorrow."

"So, we are adding this to the raw materials, huh?"

"That's right, sir."

Gun-Ho looked at the raw materials under the table. They were small white pieces of substances, size of rice grain.

"Once we add the mixed chemicals to this raw material, it will produce another raw material which is heat resistant and cold resistant with stronger durability."

"Hmm."

"You shouldn't stay here any longer, sir. You shouldn't breathe the air here without a mask."

Gun-Ho nodded his head and walked out of the compound room.

In the evening that day, Gun-Ho received a call from President Jeong-Sook Shin.

"I've met with Mr. Ding Feng at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art today."

"Really? How did it go? Any good news?"

"There was an art exhibition going on at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art earlier today, so Mr. Ding Feng and I looked at the arts together. He said Korean paintings are so advanced and beautiful."

"Who did the interpretation for you?"

"We have a person here in GH Media who is doing the translation work for the Chinese books that we bought from the international book exhibition in Shanghai the other day. He came with me and interpreted it for me. He graduated from Beijing University, and he is now teaching at a college."

"If I remember correctly, you made a contract for three history books. Which one are you going to publish first?"

"We are currently translating the book with a title, 'Is Cao Cao a hero or a villain?'"

"Have you talked to Mr. Ding Feng about your plan to hold his solo art exhibition in Korea?"

"Yes. Actually, he liked the idea a lot. He has always wanted to have his own art exhibition in Korea, and he just couldn't figure out where to start to make it happen."

"Oh, that's nice. Then he will do it."

"I told him that we will need at least 30 paintings of his without a frame. He said he would need some time to prepare. He said he had a shy of 30 pieces of his paintings. I will need time also anyway in finding a good place to hold his art exhibition."

"Hmm."

"Mr. Ding Feng wants to come to Korea again to see the place for his art exhibition."

"That sounds good."

312 Prototype Development of the Joint Venture Company 1 – Part 1

GH Mobile was doing very well. Since the new co-president—Jang-Hwan Song joined GH Mobile, its sales revenue was on the rise, and the newly developed product—AM083 Assembly was selling well. The employment was stable too. GH Mobile's turnover rate was almost zero. Moreover, the company's debts were continuously being reduced.

During the meeting with the internal auditor, the internal auditor was speaking about the company's profit and loss.

"According to our semi-annual financial report, our sales revenue was 10% and our ordinary income was 3%. If we assume that we will have about the same performance for the rest of the year, our annual sales revenue would be approximately 80 billion won. If we apply 3% of the ordinary income, our yearly profit would be 2.4 billion won."

"Hmm."

"We can, of course, will be able to distribute dividends to the major shareholder of this company—President Goo after we reserve some retention money."

"The possible amount of the dividend would be about 2 billion won then."

"Theoretically yes, that's correct. However, we have debts to pay off. We can gradually pay off the loans from the bank, but we will have to pay the creditor companies who we had or are still having a business with. If they find out that we distribute the dividend to the shareholder out of the company's profit without paying their money, it's evident that they will get very upset."

"So, you are suggesting we will have to use the company's profits to pay the debts first."

"The company's debts also belong to the major shareholder. If we reduce the company's debts, that also means the major shareholder's debt is reduced."

"Our next balance sheet will look very pretty."

"That's right, sir. Your monthly salary is 15 million won. I think it would be a wise choice to be content with the salary for now until we pay off our debts. That's what President Jang-Hwan Song is hoping as well."

"I understand what you mean. Let's pay off the debts first."

"Thank you, sir."

A while after the internal auditor left Gun-Ho's office, President Jang-Hwan Song came into the office.

"I just talked with the internal auditor. I think you made a good call on using our company's profit to pay off debts first because our debt ratio is still higher than the average debt ratio in the industry. In order to successfully register with KOSDAQ, our debt ratio needs to be 1.5 times lower than the industrial average debt ratio."

"I know that."

"When I talked with the internal auditor earlier about the profit and paying off the debts with it, we also talked about raising your salary, sir. Since we are generating profits, as the owner of this company, you probably want something in return. So, we are thinking to raise your monthly salary to 20 million won. What do you think, sir?"

"That's not necessary. We will soon have to negotiate the workers' wages with the labor union. I don't think this is the right time to raise the president's salary."

"What about changing your car then if you don't want to raise your salary? You are operating several companies now, and we think you shouldn't drive the car on your own all the time. So we are thinking of getting you a new car with a chauffeur."

"A new car? I do like my Land Rover and it runs very well. It wouldn't make me look any good if I drive around with a chauffeur at my age. Don't ever mention it to me again. I think you will need a new car since you are the one who is doing sales, and you drive a lot to meet a client."

"My Genesis is still new. It was the car I had since I worked for S Group. They let me keep it when I resigned from the position. The company provides me with gas costs and auto insurance. I don't think I will need a new car until we successfully go public."

"Hmm."

"I think maybe we should get a new car to Director Jong-Suk Park. He is now traveling a lot between the two factories in Jiksan Town and Asan City. He also often attends meetings for the plant managers with our customer companies. I saw his car the other day, and it looked a bit old."

"You're right. His Santa Fe is old. I know that because he was driving the same car when I used to go fishing with him to Pocheon City, which was years ago. It was not even a new car when he bought it at that time. I do believe he needs to change his car."

"You go all the way to Pocheon City just for fishing?"

"It was a long time ago."

"Since Director Park is a director, we can get him any car less than 2000 CC without any problem."

"You know what? Let me take care of this."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho called for Director Jong-Suk Park,

"Hey, you are not that busy these days, right?"

"Yeah, I can finally have some time to breathe. When we received the equipment from the U.S. to Dyeon Korea, it was crazy. But now, I'm good. Additionally, I have all these good and competent workers in my team, such as the plant manager, assistant manager, and team leaders. These days, I just give them some instructions in the morning and I just monitor their work, that's it."

"Well, if you don't do much at work, I guess I will have to let you go, man. The company can save money by letting you go and not paying your salary."

"It's not just me, bro. Everyone at the management level is like that. The general affairs team and the accounting team don't work crazily like the old days. The sales department is not so busy either since we have a lot of recurring customer companies."

"Is that right?"

"The workers said they were having very peaceful days at work since there is no boss who is crazily nagging them all the time. President Jang-Hwan Song is the only one who visits the production field from time to time to point out things, but that's nothing."

"Hey, which car are you driving these days?"

"The same car you know. The Hyundai Santa Fe. It's ten years old with over 20,000 kilometers on it. I need to replace the tires soon, but it works very well."

"What did you do with the 10 million won that you received from the Egnopak's president? Why didn't you get a new car with it?"

"I used that money when I purchased my Purgio condo; I bought new furniture, refrigerator, and washer and stuff."

"Did you already move in there?"

"Yes, I did."

"It's 30 pyung large. It must be very spacious for one person living. Did you say you are planning to get married this fall?"

"Actually, I am living with my girlfriend there."

"Without getting married yet?"

Jong-Suk grinned and said,

"Yeah, it just happened that way. I was actually thinking of getting a new car. It's kind of embarrassing to drive that old car, and my girlfriend doesn't seem to like it either."

"I can get you one."

"Haha. You are kidding me, right?"

"President Song actually asked me to get you a new car, under 2000 CC."

"Are you serious?"

"Since you are a director, he said it's totally fine for the company to get you a new car."

"I will ask President Song and see if he is serious about it."

"Man, I am the owner of this company. I will get you a new Santa Fe 2.0, and it is owned by the company but you will be the one who is using it. When you see President Song, just thank him."

"Thank you, bro."

"Don't mention it. It's my early wedding gift for you."

"I do really appreciate it, bro. I haven't done much for you yet."

313 Prototype Development of the Joint Venture Company 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho had lunch with GH Mobile's executive officers that day.

They went to a Korean restaurant that specialized in a set menu with seasoned wild vegetables. The restaurant was located inside an orchard.

A total of six people went there including President Jang-Hwan Song, the internal auditor— Hee-Suk Goh, the chief officer of the research center—Joon-Soo Oh, the general affairs manager—Joon-Young Choi, and Production Director Jong-Suk Park.

"Since President Song joined us, our sales revenue has increased. I wanted to have a get-together."

"Thank you."

"Mr. Chief Research Officer, how's your work? Is there anything I can improve to make you feel more comfortable working with us?"

"Everything is good, sir. Thank you."

"Does our former chief research officer come to visit us sometimes? He is now working in an advisory position."

"Yes, he does. He comes to our research center from time to time and guides us in the right direction."

"How are the new researchers doing?"

"They are doing fine too."

President Jang-Hwan Song asked the research center's chief officer,

"Oh, I was going to ask you about this. You said you personally developed something when you worked for your previous company, which you wanted to

apply for a patent but you haven't yet, right?"

"That's correct."

"Let's apply for a patent with GH Mobile's name. Even though it might not be a product that is lucrative, let's just do it."

"I don't think it will bring good money."

"That's okay. We just need some patented products to show that we are a decent and competent company. It will work favorably for us when we apply for the KOSDAQ registration."

"Well, since you brought it up, I actually have one more item to be patented. I even once made a presentation about this item at the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics & Trade."

"Is it related to an automobile?"

"That's right. It is about the suspension system."

"Let's then apply for two items. We can have them patented with GH Mobile's name."

"But I doubt that this item would bring a good business. Moreover, it will cost us to have them patented and once they are patented we will pay some fees to maintain them."

"Those fees are nominal. You don't have to worry about it."

President Song looked at Gun-Ho and said,

"President Goo, let's do this. Our company can pay for the fees and get two patented items."

"Okay. That sounds good."

Food came out. There were so many side dishes. Gun-Ho ordered two bottles of beer as well.

As Gun-Ho filled up each person's glass, he said,

"Let's just have one glass of beer for lunch since we need to get back to work."

The research center's chief officer said as he was taking his glass from Gun-Ho,

"It's nice that we don't drink a bomb shot here. In my previous company, they always made a bomb shot and we had to drink it. I tried everything I could to avoid it."

"Hahaha."

As the business was going well, the executive officers looked happy and relaxed.

Director Jong-Suk Park, who was sitting on the last seat at the table, said,

"I want to thank you, President Song. I was told that you are the one who suggested getting me a new car."

"I suggested President Goo getting you a new car because you are traveling a lot between Dyeon Korea and GH Mobile, and also you often go to a meeting with our client or vendor companies. You need a good car for your work. Also, your current car is too old. You don't have to thank me, Director Park. But keep in mind that you have to choose a car that is less than 2000 CC."

The general affairs director raised his hand.

"I have something to suggest too."

"Sure. Go on."

"Our wage negotiation with the labor union starts next month. We all have to attend the meeting on behalf of GH Media, except President Goo."

"We know that."

"President Jang-Hwan Song will lead our representation there. So, I was thinking to suggest to you, President Song, to consider the welfare of our workers. We don't have to spend much money for it. We can give them some bonus vacation days for those who have been working with us for an extensive period of time, or we can rent a vacation home to an exemplary worker or something like that."

Gun-Ho looked at President Song, and said,

"That doesn't sound bad at all. What do you think?"

"Sure. Why not?"

President Song said while nodding his head.

The internal auditor chipped in while having a tofu dish.

"We can purchase two condos as a vacation home under GH Mobile's name, so our workers can use it when necessary. Also, anyone from the management team can use it too."

Gun-Ho nodded his head.

The internal auditor continued to talk,

"It's also a good idea to have a business membership to a golf country club with the company's name. It will be very useful for President Song in trying to bring more new clients. He can use it, and also the executive officers can use it too when we take some time off. I know that President Goo, President Song, and the research center's chief officer do play golf. I also know how to play golf. I guess that the general affairs director and Director Jong-Suk Park are the only ones who don't know how to play golf, but they can learn it easily."

President Song looked at Gun-Ho this time, and said,

"I think it's a good idea. The golf membership fee doesn't exceed 100 million won in this area. I will work harder, President Goo as we need more revenue to spend in buying the membership."

"Okay. Let's do that."

They all had a pleasant and relaxing time during lunch.

After lunch, Gun-Ho went to Dyeon Korea.

The production worksite was filled with loud noises. It seemed that the machines were working.

When Gun-Ho entered the worksite, everyone was standing in front of a machine.

"Are they coming out?"

"Yes, they are."

Director Kim brought a small and yellow piece of substance on his palm. It looked like a bean.

"So we are wrapping these materials up and sell them, huh?"

"That's right. It's an elastomer plastic material. We call it EP. We pack them in 20 kilograms. We have already ordered the wrapping bags and boxes, and they will arrive tomorrow."

"We will at first target the companies that are currently using the materials purchased from Monsanto Company in the U.S. or German Company—BASF. I hope GH Mobile uses more of our Dyeon Korea's materials too."

"Hmm."

"One thing that bothers me now is that these materials that we just produced look a bit different from the samples that the American engineers bought from the U.S. Their colors and the degree of gloss are a little different. I want Director Jong-Suk Park to come here tomorrow and help us with the machines."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho then noticed that there was a man who was standing by the machine. Gun-Ho had never seen that man before. Director Kim said,

"Oh. This is the candidate who we just had an interview with, for the position of a manager in the maintenance team. This is our president."

The man who looked like he was in his late 30s gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho.

"I'm Yong-Duk An, sir."

"Nice to meet you."

"He used to work as a manager in the maintenance team at the industrial complex in Cheonan City. Sir, would you like to interview him before we finalize his employment?"

"It wouldn't be necessary. If you, Director Kim and Director Yoon are okay with it, then I'm okay."

"Okay, then, I will let him know that he can start working from tomorrow."

"I look forward to working with you."

Gun-Ho extended his hand to the man for a handshake. The newly hired maintenance team's manager gave a deep bow to Gun-Ho while holding Gun-Ho's hand with both hands.

After having a handshake, the new manager grabbed work gloves and walked towards the machines and laid down under it, even though no one asked to do so. He started working right away.

314 Prototype Development of the Joint Venture Company 2 – Part 1

Director Dong-Chan Kim at Dyeon Korea didn't like the sample product that they just produced.

"I can't send these to the companies that have been using Dyeon's products. They wouldn't consider these as authentic Dyeon products. With the help of those American engineers who came directly from Dyeon America, we still couldn't produce exactly the same products as Dyeon's."

Director Dong-Chan Kim made a call to President Jang-Hwan Song in GH Mobile.

"We have produced Dyeon Korea's sample products."

"That's nice. Congratulations."

"But we might have some problems..."

"Are you asking me to send Director Jong-Suk Park there?"

"Does the former chief research officer come to work to GH Mobile these days, doesn't he?"

"Yes, he does. He usually comes in the morning and leaves early. Why are you asking?"

"I am hoping that you could send us the former chief research officer along with Director Jong-Suk Park to us, maybe for one or two days. We seriously need help."

"You can't keep asking us to send our workers there. We have our own work to do here too."

"You have tons of other workers. We just need them for one or two days."

"Okay. I will send them, just for two days. That's all I can offer."

"I am working for Dyeon Korea now, but GH Mobile is home to me. We need to provide help and support to each other. In doing the sales work for Dyeon Korea's products, I will also keep looking for a good sales opportunity for GH Mobile's products as well."

"Sounds good."

Gun-Ho was wondering how the product manufacturing was going in Dyeon Korea, and he went into its production worksite. Dyeon Korea didn't have a separate research center yet, so they used the production field for researching and also product producing.

"Huh? Mr. Former Research Chief Officer, you are here today. Oh, Director Park, I didn't expect to see you here either."

Director Kim came to Gun-Ho and said,

"I asked for them, sir. The sample products show different degrees of gloss and a high degree of hardness compared to Dyeon America's products."

We failed on our first and second tries in the morning, but on our third try in the afternoon, we finally produce the products which are very similar to the ones from Dyeon America."

Gun-Ho asked Director Park,

"What went wrong during the first and second tries?"

"It was about the accuracy of the temperature and the duration of cooling. The former research chief officer figured it out. I guess his extensive experience in the field tells something."

"Can we begin our mass production then?"

"Yes after we receive production orders. Director Dong-Chan Kim took some sample products and left to meet with potential buyers to show them the samples. He said that he would first meet with the current GH Mobile's client companies."

While Gun-Ho was talking with Director Park, Director Kim came in.

"Director Park! Give me ten more boxes of our sample products."

"What happened to the products you took this morning, brother? You already distributed them all?"

"Yes, they are all gone already. I need more."

"We haven't produced more yet. The production manager—Manager Yoo and Assistant Manager Seong are working on it right now. Well, I'd better get back to my work at GH Mobile. Brother, don't ask me to come here too often."

"Come on. Stay longer. We need you here."

Director Park always called anyone who was older than him as a brother, no matter what position they were in, except GH Mobile's President Jang-Hwan Song, the internal auditor, and the chief research officer. That was probably because they were way older than Jong-Suk to be a brother.

Director Kim came closer to Director Park and grabbed his arm, with a smile.

"If you really have to go, then build us a shelf before you leave. We need them to store the products."

"You have a new manager in the maintenance team. Ask him to do it."

"It's a two-person job, man. Someone has to hold the shelf piece tight in the process, right?"

Director Yoon brought a forklift truck and other equipment to move the products. Jong-Suk did some testing drive with the forklift truck. The assistant manager of the general affairs team brought a lady who would work in the company restaurant.

Jong-Suk and the new manager in the maintenance team started building a shelf. The two proficient workers built a beautiful three-tier metal shelf in no time.

Dyeon Korea's vice president—Mr. Adam Castler, who was watching them building a shelf, raised his thumb when they finished it, and winked at them.

Gun-Ho received a call from President Jang-Hwan Song at that moment.

"Our former chief officer of the research center and Director Park went to Dyeon Korea for support."

"Yes, I am there with them. They said they would return to GH Mobile tomorrow."

"I think we can let the former research chief officer stay with Dyeon Korea since they desperately need someone proficient in the field."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. Since we have our chief officer in the research center, maybe it's not a good idea to have two chief officers here."

"I believe that they are very close to each other, and they used to study together when they were at the Technical University of Munich in Germany."

"That's true. They were good friends to each other, but one used to work at our research center as a chief officer and the other one is currently working in the same position. They could face some conflict in their opinions and other things, and the workers might feel like they have two bosses."

"Hmm."

"Moreover, if he stays with Dyeon Korea, it could appear that Dyeon Korea has a research center, even though he is holding an advisory position for only one year. He probably has more work to do there. He can teach the young workers there too."

"Do you think he will accept our proposition?"

"I'm sure he will like it. He is probably feeling uncomfortable working here at the research center with the new chief officer."

"Okay then. As long as he is willing to take the relocation proposition, I'm good with it."

Gun-Ho asked for Director Kim and Director Yoon,

"Is the GH Mobile's former research chief officer still here?"

"Yes, he is."

"He is in an advisory position with a one-year contract with GH Mobile, and he will stay with us until the end of this year. I'm thinking of having him move to this location. He will be very helpful here. We can give him an office, and he can read books there and give some guides to the workers in the production field whenever necessary."

Director Kim chipped in.

"I absolutely agree with you, sir. I was thinking that we need someone who has an extensive work experience in the field just like him."

"Do you think Mr. Adam Castler wouldn't like the idea?"

"We have a regular meeting for the joint venture tomorrow. I will make a former request during the meeting, and you, sir, show your agreement and support for my request, then I don't think Mr. Castler will refuse it."

"Hmm. Okay."

It was the very first meeting of Dyeon Korea since the joint venture company was established. It was a long and boring meeting because anything that anyone said during the meeting had to be interpreted by an interpreter.

The general affairs manager led the meeting.

"This is our first meeting since Dyeon Korea was formed. We have President Gun-Ho Goo, Vice President Adam Castler, Director Dong-Chan Kim, Production Manager Hee-Yeol, Assistant Manager Il-Gi Seong, Accounting Assistant Manager Myeong-Sook Jo, Assistant Manager Yong-Duk An from the maintenance team, Assistant Manager Seon-Hong Park from the general affairs team, Staff Seon-Hye Yee, and the three engineers from Dyeon America along with Manager Joo-Young Yee who is interpreting for us today. We have one more worker from the company restaurant but she couldn't join us today for personal reasons. We currently have fifteen employees in Dyeon Korea."

315 Prototype Development of the Joint Venture Company 2 – Part 2

After the general affairs manager listed all the employees who attended the meeting, Interpreter Yee was preparing to interpret what he just heard. At that moment, Gun-Ho told him,

"Please make it short."

"Okay, sir."

The interpreter listed everyone at the meeting with their positions only and he didn't list their names, to make it short.

Gun-Ho then said,

"Thank you for joining us today. We could successfully establish our joint venture because of your hard work. Now, we began producing our sample products, and this is the time when we focus all of our time and energy on sale. In order to efficiently support the sale, we first have to produce quality products."

Gun-Ho gave time to the interpreter to interpret what he just said before continuing his speech. He made his statement short enough so the interpreter could easily interpret it. Once he finished a fragment of his speech, he turned his head and looked at the interpreter and let him interpret before he continued to talk.

"Also, in order to produce quality products, the production team needs support from the maintenance team. To make all of these work smoothly, the support from the accounting and general affairs team is essential."

It was Mr. Adam Castler's turn.

"The American company and the Korean company are in the same boat now. Both companies invested 500,000 dollars in cash into this joint venture

company, not to mention any investment in kind. We started with 1 million dollars to operate the company, and we have already spent a lot on the wages, equipment, etc, and we will be continuously spending the money as we operate the company. Since we now started producing products, we will have to focus on selling them."

Director Kim also made his speech.

"I made a tour of our potential buyer companies yesterday with our sample products. At first, they all seemed to be satisfied with our products since they look the same as Lymondell Dyeon's products. We will have to re-calculate our product cost though. I had a rough product cost because I didn't have enough time to make it precise. After this meeting, we will make an official product cost statement."

Mr. Adam Castler raised his hand.

"I have the cost accounting of Lymondell Dyeon with me. I will give it to you so you could use it as a reference."

The new female worker—Ms. Seon-Hye Yee from the general affairs team walked out of the meeting room and came back with green tea. She distributed to each attendee of the meeting.

Gun-Ho started speaking again,

"Our target market is not just Korea. Our products are not made for the purpose of the national sale only, but we are mainly targeting the China and Southeast Asia market. That's why Lymondell Dyeon sent us Mr. Adam Castler who has rich experience with the multinational market."

Mr. Adam Castler was paying great attention to what Gun-Ho was saying at that time because he heard his name. After he heard the interpretation, he said,

"Once we stabilize the national market, I will make my tour to Southeast Asia for sales work."

"Well, I guess it's almost time to wrap up our meeting today. Anyone has anything to add?"

It was quiet until Director Kim raised his hand.

"The most important thing at this phase is producing quality products. So, I'd like to make a request to take one more person from GH Mobile. He came here yesterday to help with producing the sample products. He used to work for GH Mobile as a research chief officer, and he is now working in an advisory position. I'm requesting to have him with us for a limited period of time."

Gun-Ho added as he had discussed with Director Kim before the meeting started,

"His contract with GH Mobile expires at the end of this year, so we don't have to worry about keeping him as an employee. He received his Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany, and he has been working at a research center for a long time. Mr. Adam Castler, what do you think? I think it is a great idea to have him here with us."

"Did you say that he obtained his Ph.D. from the Technical University of Munich in Germany?"

"That's correct."

"Okay! I agree with you."

The first meeting of the joint venture ended.

After the meeting, Gun-Ho was reading an economic newspaper that Ms. Seon-Hye Yee brought to him, in his office, when he received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim in China.

"I heard Dyeon Korea already started producing its sample products."

"That's right."

"I just talked with Jong-Suk on the phone, and he said the sample products looked exactly the same as the products from Dyeon America."

"Well, they certainly appear to be, but we are not sure yet. Our clients will have to use them before we know for sure."

"Maybe we can store some of them in China."

"Let's give it some time. I want to see first if our clients in Korea are satisfied with the products after their use. We currently have only two machines. We will have to get more."

"Oh, you know what? I went to see Seukang Li yesterday. He asked me to see him."

"For what?"

"He gave me a pamphlet. He said you would know if you see it."

"What kind of pamphlet is it?"

"It's about an art exhibition for Chinese young painters, Chinese avant-garde art, and for the world-renowned artist—Mr. Chao Chin's relics, etc. There was a lot."

"Okay. Send it to me."

"And I received a call from Suk-Ho Lee. He said he would stop by my office tomorrow."

"Suk-Ho Lee? The one who is running a bar in Gyeongridan Street?"

"That's right."

"What's the occasion?"

"I don't know. I don't really want to see him though. He was not a nice person to me when we were in high school."

"I think you should meet him since he wants to come to see you there. You can buy him a lunch or something. I'm wondering why he wants to go all the way to China to see you."

"We will find out once he gets here."

Gun-Ho talked to President Jang-Hwan Song about sending the former research chief officer to Dyeon Korea.

"The vice president—Mr. Adam Castler agreed to have him in Dyeon Korea. Why don't you inform him? So he can go to work at Dyeon Korea starting tomorrow."

"Okay."

"We probably won't be able to extend his contract for the advisory position, but I want him to work in a comfortable environment while he is working with us. Please assign him an office."

"Thank you."

"Have you heard anything from the S Group's factory in Changwon City? We sent our products there the other day."

"I haven't heard anything from them yet, but they ordered more products. I guess they are satisfied with our products."

"Really?"

"I went into S Group's ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system this morning and verified their additional order. They want 10,000 more by December."

"Really? Haha."

"And Director Kim is here now."

"Director Kim?"

"Yes, he brought Dyeon Korea's sample products to us as part of his sales effort for Dyeon Korea. I'm giving it a passing grade for their appearance. Director Kim asked me to mention Dyeon Korea's products to our client companies when I visit them. In return, he will do the same."

"That sounds great. We can help each other."

"Out of five orders from S Group, we are already sending products for three of them, and we are still working on developing products for the other two orders. Once they are ready, I will see if we can use Dyeon Korea's material to produce the products."

"Sounds good."

316 Seukang Li's Suggestion 1 – Part 1

Gun-Ho received a lot of mail that day, not just the mails to GH Mobile, including spam, but also the mails addressed to Dyeon Korea.

Gun-Ho went through the mails before throwing out everything except the mail from China sent by Min-Hyeok Kim, and the world-history cartoon books from GH Media for the fifth and sixth books.

"There are several pages of the pamphlet in the mail from Min-Hyeok. An art exhibition for Chinese young painters? I don't know much about paintings, but these look like the watercolor paintings painted by elementary schoolers."

Gun-Ho then moved to the next pamphlet.

"Oh, this is about the art exhibition for the world-renowned artist—Mr. Chao Chin's relics. So, I guess this painter passed away already. Well, his paintings are strange, and they are too Chinese. What's the next one? Chinese avant-garde art? This art exhibition is still going on in Shanghai."

Since Gun-Ho didn't know much about art, he wanted to hear some professional opinions about it. Gun-Ho made a call to President Jeong-Sook Shin in GH Media, who used to work as a curator in an art museum before.

"President Shin?"

"Yes, sir, this is Jeong-Sook Shin."

"I've just received the cartoon books you sent to me. How are things going there?"

"We have published up to the sixth book of these cartoon series, and they are selling very well."

"Director Seukang Li sent me several pamphlets through Min-Hyeok Kim from

Shanghai. These are art exhibition pamphlets. I will send these to you by mail. I think you should look at them."

"Can you tell me what sort of art exhibitions are they?"

"These are about art exhibitions for Chinese young painters and for the world-renowned artist—Mr. Chao Chin's relics, etc."

"I see."

President Jeong-Sook Shin didn't sound very excited.

"Oh, there is one more. It's the Chinese avant-garde art exhibition."

"Oh, really? You have their pamphlet too? Please mail them to me. I've read about that avant-garde art exhibition on the Internet."

"These paintings look strange to me, but I guess you like them."

"Chinese young artists' avant-garde arts are highly recognized in other countries. For example, there is a painter named Zhang Xiaogang. His painting, 'forever love' was sold at 11 billion won."

"Is that true?"

"I really wanted to see the avant-garde art pamphlet. Lucky me."

After getting off the phone with President Jeong-Sook Shin, Gun-Ho fell into thought.

'One painting could be sold for 11 billion won... One can make huge enough money by selling one nice painting, which could change his life.'

Gun-Ho hadn't been very interested in art before he learned that there were paintings that could be sold for billions or tens of billions of won. Until then, Mr. Ding Feng's paintings were all the art he knew.

'If I can hold an art exhibition with the paintings that could be sold for 11 billion won, then how much commission can I have? I'm supposed to be enjoying art as they give me inspiration or some sort of emotional comfort or whatever. But I

can't. All I can think of when I look at them is the business and the money that could be brought by selling a piece of art. I guess I can never be an artist. Min-Hyeok's mother was so excited when he bought her a condo that cost 200 million won. It was her first large home in her entire life, and she even danced in joy. With 11 billion won, she can buy 55 of them.'

Gun-Ho wanted to make sure that President Jeong-Sook Shin gave him accurate information. Maybe she was exaggerating a bit. Gun-Ho searched the artist's name, Zhang Xiaogang on the Internet. What President Shin told him was true.

Gun-Ho asked Ms. Seon-Hye Yee to mail the pamphlets to GH Media to President Shin, and he made a call to Director Kang,

"Was there anyone who showed interest in our basement space?"

"No, sir. I guess because the space is so large, it will take some time to rent it out."

"Do you remember how much rent the previous sauna business used to pay when they occupied the space?"

"They paid 10 million won per month with the security deposit of 100 million won. We currently put it on the market with a monthly rent of 5 million won and 50 million won for the security deposit. But no one hasn't come to take a look at it yet. Since the space had been used for a sauna business, if someone wants to run a restaurant there, they would have to redo the entire interior and that would cost a lot. So the potential tenants seem to be hesitant, I guess."

"Can you get a price quote for redoing the interior of that space for an art gallery business?"

"An art gallery, sir?"

"Right, a gallery where we can host an art exhibition."

"I'm not sure if the space is right for an art gallery. Well, I don't know much about that field. I will get a price quote and will let you know, sir."

Gun-Ho took a flight to Shanghai. He wanted to visit the avant-garde art exhibition that Seukang Li's pamphlet introduced even though he found the

name was strange. These days, Gun-Ho always took either the first class or at least business class when he traveled abroad. He went straight to Shanghai without stopping by at his auto parts company in Suzhou City.

The Chinese avant-garde art exhibition was held at a contemporary art gallery located on Nanjing Road. Gun-Ho noticed that there were more people there than Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition, also many of the visitors were young people.

"These paintings are creepy."

The paintings were really weird. One of the paintings depicted a human face, but the face line was twisted, and the person's eyes, mouth, and fingers were all out of place. The mouth was on one eye's place, and the mouth's place was occupied by a finger, and Gun-Ho couldn't figure out why. However, the overall vibe coming out of the painting was somewhat artistic.

"I don't know what the author's intention is, but I think there should be something that the painter tried to express."

Gun-Ho looked at the label placed under the painting. The author's name and the title of the painting were written.

"Desire of May?"

In the painting, there was the burning sun with a weird human face. The person's eyes were strange, but Gun-Ho could see a desire in them.

"If we display these paintings in a gallery in the basement of GH Building, would it be successful? These are so artistic that maybe a big exhibition hall such as Seoul Arts Center, Sejong Cultural Center, or the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art should handle. Should I still try it?"

Gun-Ho made a call to Seukang Li.

"Hey, it's me, Gun-Ho Goo. I am at the Chinese avant-garde art exhibition right now."

"Oh, really? I sent you the pamphlet a few days ago, and you are already here."

"Let's meet. I want to see you, friend."

"I have an important meeting that I have to attend right now. Let's meet after the meeting. I haven't even had lunch yet. We can meet at McDonald's which is located across the street from the exhibition hall. Let's have a hamburger."

"Hamburger? Sounds good. I wanted to have some food other than Chinese oily food today."

Gun-Ho was sitting at a table in McDonald's near the exhibition hall when Seukang Li ran into the fast-food restaurant. He was wearing a jacket.

"Hey, Seukang Li! Over here! I'm here."

"Oh, Gun-Ho Goo!"

"You seemed to be very busy today. I hope I'm not interrupting any of your work schedules."

"No, no. Don't worry about it. Today is a bit busier than other days, but I'm handling it fine. My current position requires a lot of work, as a matter of fact, because I have to handle the media and the press."

317 Seukang Li's Suggestion 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho and Seukang Li were conversing at the McDonald's near the art exhibition hall.

"The Chinese avant-garde art exhibition was actually very interesting. The young Chinese painters are amazing. I don't know much about art, but I can still tell how talented they are."

"I totally agree with you. Many Chinese artists are highly talented. I sent you those art pamphlets because I think it's a good idea to have those art exhibitions in Korea too."

"Oh, before we continue to talk, let's order some food first. What do you want?"

"Umm, I will have the chicken burger combo meal!"

"Okay. I will have the same."

Gun-Ho then placed the order for two combo meals with chicken burgers.

They continued to talk while having their chicken burgers.

"So, you are saying, if I want to host an art exhibition in Korea, you will connect me with the art galleries here, right?"

"Of course. I can certainly do that."

"I'm not sure if you know this. I actually started a joint venture company in Korea with the American chemical company called Lymondell Dyeon."

"I am aware of that. Jien Wang told me the other day."

"So, I am extremely busy with that joint venture right now. It's hard for me to focus on the art business. However, I am interested in it, and I want to start collecting the necessary information."

"I see. It's a smart move to collect information before you actually execute your plan. By the way, you are an amazing businessman."

"What are you talking about?"

"Jien Wang told me that he stopped by your factory in Cheonan City when he visited Korea last time for the symposium hosted by Seoul National University. He showed me a few pictures he took of the factory. It looked amazing, and I was told that you are the major shareholder with 100% of the company's shares."

"Right. I don't actually spend much time there any longer though. I have another person handling the daily operation of that factory. I stay at the joint venture company in Asan City for most of the time these days."

"How many shares are you holding for that joint venture?"

"Dyeon America owns 50%, and I own the other 50%."

"What about the investment funds?"

"The authorized capital is 20 million dollars and the paid-in-capital is 10 million dollars."

"Wow! 20 million and 10 million dollars? Wow. It's incredible. 10 million dollars is a huge amount of funds in China."

"If we go back to the art exhibition matter, GH Media's female president actually started showing her interest in the art exhibition and that made me look into the matter."

"Is that the female president who came to the book exhibition?"

"That's right. That's her."

"She sure seemed to have very elegant taste."

"Haha. You think so?"

"Also, Gun-Ho, I want you to think of expanding your business into a new field."

Seukang Li dragged his chair toward Gun-Ho to sit closer to him, and said,

"It's about the production of soap operas."

"Soap opera production? I almost have zero knowledge on that subject."

"I'm talking about Chinese soap operas, not Korean ones."

"Chinese soap operas?"

"Jien Wang and I, we have been trying to acquire a production company of soap operas, but we are short on funds. Why don't you join us in investing in this field? Maybe you can take half of the shares. I believe this business has a bright future."

"Are you sure? The Chinese soap operas could bring good revenue?"

"You shouldn't take it lightly. One of the Chinese production companies called Huace Media (Huace Yingshi: the company which imported the popular Korean soap opera, Descendants of the Sun) is valued for more than 20 billion Yuan (approximately 3.6 trillion won)."

"What? 20 billion Yuan!?"

Gun-Ho couldn't close his mouth at the shocking number.

"Wow. That amount makes me feel like the money I've been making so far is so small that I could only buy chewing gum or something."

"That's not all. Once our new production company becomes stable, we can even register it with KOSDAQ. I believe Korea is open to it."

"That... is true."

Gun-Ho was dumbfounded with astonishment.

"I initially thought your GH Media handles all sorts of media contents, and then when I learned that it was a book publication company, I was a bit disappointed. Then I had an opportunity to meet with GH Media's female president at the book exhibition. She was a very elegant and intelligent lady, and she also had broad

knowledge in art, especially paintings. So I started paying attention to GH Media."

"Hmm."

"Of course, Jien Wang and myself can't directly involve in running a company because of our current position as a college professor and a government official. We just want to invest in a soap opera production company. If there is a soap opera production company that is suffering financially despite their competence in the field, we want to help them and share the profits."

"I understood your intention. Before I make my decision, I want to see how Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition, that GH Media will host, goes in Korea. Also, I need to have Dyeon Korea stabilized."

"That sounds great. I do admire your prudence and carefulness in business and the fact that once you make your decision, you move forward without any hesitation in the process. It's not just me who recognized these invaluable characteristics of yours, but Jien Wang had also talked to me about it too."

"Thank you for your kind words, Seukang Li."

"Well, I think I have to take off. I have another meeting that I need to attend. Why don't we have a drink in the evening?"

"I will have a rain check for the drink. I'd better head out Suzhou City to visit my factory there."

"Oh, that company where Min-Hyeok Kim is working at? Of course, you should go there. I will see you later then. Thank you for the burger."

"Okay. Talk to you later."

Gun-Ho then made a call to Min-Hyeok Kim.

"Hey, I am in Shanghai right now. I am on my way to the express bus terminal. Can you meet me this evening?"

"You are in Shanghai?! Why didn't you tell me earlier? I would have picked you up at the airport."

"No, that was not necessary. I know you are busy, and you don't have to waste gas by driving all the way to the airport in Shanghai just to pick me up. It's a quick and easy ride with the express bus to Suzhou City."

"I will then wait for you at the express bus terminal in Suzhou City."

"Sounds good. Can you get me a hotel room?"

Gun-Ho arrived in Suzhou City. The sun was down. The sky became reddish. It was a pleasant trip with the bus except for one thing. A Chinese lady was sitting next to Gun-Ho on the bus, and Gun-Ho had to suffer from the weird smell that she was constantly exuding, all the way from Shanghai to Suzhou City.

"President Goo!"

"Hey, Min-Hyeok Kim!"

"Was it comfortable riding a bus?"

"It was okay except the lady next to me. It was really hard to sit there with all those strange smells coming from her."

"It happens here sometimes. I told you that I would pick you up with my car."

"Did you reserve a hotel room for me?"

"Yeah. It's the Pacific Hotel. It's located in downtown, a convenient location. You can easily find some tourist spots from there too. They have a pool too."

"Let's have dinner at the hotel and have something other than Chinese food. I don't feel like having Chinese food today. It's strange."

"Maybe because of the lady sitting next to you on the bus. Haha, let's have some steak with a glass of wine at the hotel."

Gun-Ho arrived at the hotel and did the check-in and received the room key. After he changed his clothes, he walked down to the lobby.

They had their dinner at a restaurant in the hotel. Gun-Ho ordered a steak with a glass of French wine.

"I hope I'm not taking your precious time with your wife."

"No, don't worry about it. My wife comes home late too."

"I thought teachers get off work early."

"Oh, she has another job after school. She teaches at an academic institution."

"Really? I think you will save a lot of money soon."

"Well, I doubt that because as you know, in China, we don't get a high salary. But I feel good because I have my own home. My wife is so proud of me too. We are living in a luxurious condo, I drive an Audi, and I run a company as a president."

"That's right. Oh, by the way, did you meet Suk-Ho Lee from Gyeonridan Street?"

"Yes, I did."

"Why did he want to see you?"

318 Seukang Li's Suggestion 2 – Part 1

Min-Hyeok was telling the story to Gun-Ho about Suk-Ho's visit to Suzhou City.

"Suk-Ho closed his bar business at Gyeongridan Street."

"What is he doing for a living now?"

"He said he wants to open a business in China."

"A business in China? What kind of business is he talking about?"

"He said he purchased three commercial stores in Shenyang City. Those stores were not expensive at all, and he could cover the costs of the three stores with the sales proceeds he earned when he sold his bar. He seemed to be so excited."

"So, he purchased commercial stores, not residential property... Maybe he wants to make money by leasing them out?"

"Well, he said he wants to open a restaurant or a clothing store there."

"A clothing store? Is he going to sell Korean clothes?"

"His wife used to run a clothing store in Itaewon Town before. I heard that the market around Itaewon Town is not doing well these days after the U.S. military base moved from Yongsan City to Pyeongtaek City."

"What is he doing in Suzhou City then? His business is in Shenyang City."

"He was trying to gather some information about business registration and tax stuff. Also, he wants to travel to other areas of China."

"So he is running his business as a sole proprietor. The business registration and taxes for a sole proprietorship are handled differently from the ones of a company. An individual business owner must be very careful in doing business in China. China is not an easy place to run a business. I once had my restaurant

in China several years ago, but I didn't really make any money from that business. I made my money by buying and selling real properties. By the way, can he speak Chinese?"

"Not at all. He uses an interpretation service by a Korean Chinese in Shenyang City."

"Hmm. He really has to take every precaution here."

"He asked me to come and visit him at Shenyang City."

"What's your schedule tomorrow? Can you go somewhere with me?"

"Sure. I have nothing special scheduled for tomorrow."

"Then, let's go to Dandong City that you mentioned before. We can take a train from Shenyang to Dandong. We can meet Suk-Ho and see how he is doing before going to Dandong City. And we can meet the deputy director of Dandong Economic Development Zone."

"That sounds good. I will reserve two flight tickets heading to Shenyang for tomorrow's trip. Tomorrow, let's make a quick stop to the company to hear the current status of the company's profits and losses in the morning, and then we can leave in the afternoon. I will make a call to Suk-Ho and the deputy director of the Dandong Economic Development Zone today, and let them know that we are coming."

The next morning, Gun-Ho went to GH Parts Company which Min-Hyeok was running.

GH Mobile's former plant manager was there. He started working with Min-Hyeok after he retired from GH Mobile.

"How are you, sir? How's your life here?"

"I'm doing great. President Min-Hyeok Kim has been very nice and understanding to me."

The former GH Mobile's plant manager looked healthy and seemed to be doing well. Gun-Ho felt relieved.

"After the plant manager joined us, our machines are 100% in a working condition all the time."

The factory was working vigorously. Min-Hyeok started My Machine program after he learned it from GH Mobile, and the factory became extremely clean ever since. Moreover, the workers' attitude at work had been substantially improved as well. Min-Hyeok introduced the managers and team leaders to Gun-Ho.

"This is the owner of this company. He came from Korea."

"Ni Hao!"

"Ni Hao!"

The workers said hello to Gun-Ho simultaneously.

Min-Hyeok gave a report to Gun-Ho on GH Parts Company's profits and losses. Min-Hyeok had the employee, who was in charge of the accounting, stay in the office while giving the financial report to Gun-Ho, and he verified some numbers with that employee to make sure the numbers he was giving to Gun-Ho were accurate. By listening to the conversation between Min-Hyeok and the accounting staff, Gun-Ho noticed that Min-Hyeok's Chinese had improved significantly.

"Hey, you speak Chinese fluently now."

"Nah, I need to practice more, or maybe because I live with a Chinese woman now."

Min-Hyeok grinned.

"I'm serious. Your Chinese sound great."

"As you can see on the chart, our annual sales revenue was about 300 million won until last month. It increased to 350 million won. That's when we started selling GH Mobile's new product—AM083 Assembly. I made a new contract with a new buyer company recently, so our annual sales revenue will be about 400 million won starting next month."

"I think you need to hire more workers."

"We are maintaining the same number of workers; we have 42. Instead of hiring more workers, I told them that I will raise their salaries. They like it better. People say our company requires hard work, but it pays very well in the industry."

"Really?"

Gun-Ho took out his bankbook and stamp, and said,

"I didn't have a chance to exchange currency. Can you withdraw 10,000 Yuan from my bank account for me?"

Gun-Ho handed to Min-Hyeok his bankbook with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and his personal stamp. Gun-Ho had about 7 million Yuan (about 1.2 billion Korean won) in his bank account in China. That was the payment from Jinxi Construction Company when they terminated the joint venture.

Min-Hyeok asked for the staff from the accounting team. Min-Hyeok filled out the bank's withdrawal slip and stamped on two papers and then gave them to the staff and said,

"Please withdraw 10,000 Yuan from this account with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China."

"Hao La (Okay)."

When the accounting staff left the office, Gun-Ho said with a smile,

"So, here, you stamp twice on the bank withdrawal slip, huh?"

"Oh, one of the papers is a power of attorney. If the owner of the bank account sends someone else to the bank on behalf of him, they require a power of attorney."

Once the staff brought 10,000 Yuan, Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok headed out to the airport. They were headed to Shenyang City.

Shenyang City's old name was Fengtian. It was the capital city and the center of politics, economics, and culture of China's northeast Liaoning province. Nurhaci claimed Shenyang as the new capital city during the Qing dynasty. Hong Taiji's

grave and the palace were located in Shengyang as well.

When Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok arrived at the airport in Shenyang City, Suk-Ho Lee was waiting for them at the airport.

"Hey, Suk-Ho Lee!"

"Gun-Ho Goo! Min-Hyeok Kim! It's really good to see you guys. Thank you for coming to see me."

Suk-Ho looked tired.

"I didn't rent a car since you stay here only for one night. We can just take a taxi."

"We don't have to go straight to the hotel now since we don't even have any luggage with us. Let us see your new business first. We'd better leave now, so we can get there before sundown."

"Sure. Let's walk to the taxi station."

"Where did you say you are staying?"

"The area is called Xita. A lot of Korean Chinese live there. We don't even need to speak Chinese."

There were really a lot of native ethnic Korean people in Xita. They had their own school, and Gun-Ho could easily hear the Korean language on the street. The children, who seemed to be on their way going home after school, spoke Korean, but their accents were strange. It was more like a North Korean accent.

"Haha. This place is really interesting."

It was certainly an unusual place for Gun-Ho. He looked around the street. The street was filled with a lot of people, and it was crowded. The buildings there were old and shabby, and they were giving off a gloomy feeling.

Suk-Ho's store was located in a building that was located a bit off the Xita area. He bought three stores in that area. Two of them were closed with a shutter door, and one was open with some clothes hanging inside. It seemed that the area

didn't have high foot traffic at all. Gun-Ho was wondering if Suk-Ho would make any money with his business at this location.

"Are you getting enough foot traffic in this area?"

"The area will soon be developed dramatically. They have a big plan for it already. It was just like this when I started my bar at Gyeonridan Street. This area will soon be vitalized."

319 Seukang Li's Suggestion 2 – Part 2

Gun-Ho asked more about Suk-Ho's stores and the area,

"The area at Gyeonridan Street was located close to Itaewon Town where the business was already developed, but here..."

Gun-Ho then stopped right there. He didn't want to say anything negative at this point. Maybe what Suk-Ho needed now was encouragement and hope.

"Well, since you bought three stores, once this area is developed, you will be able to sell them for a much higher price than your purchasing price."

"Yeah, maybe I will sell them once the price goes up, but for now, I'm thinking of operating the stores myself."

"So you have some clothes in the store already. Did you bring them from Korea?"

"Right. I bought them from Dongdaemun Market. They are selling well."

"Did you already register for the business?"

"Yes. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to receive the residence visa."

"What about the stores themselves? Did you register your ownership of them?"

"Not the ownership, but I do have the contract for the lease."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho became a bit worried for Suk-Ho. The big problem was that Suk-Ho couldn't understand the Chinese language at all. He was heavily relying on the interpreter who was Korean Chinese. Since he was living in Xita where he could freely communicate in Korean, he wouldn't need to learn the Chinese language. He wouldn't really feel uncomfortable without knowing the Chinese language.

"Well, it's good to see you here and your stores. Just like your bar at Gyeonridan Street, I hope your stores here do very well. Since I came here to see a friend, I will buy you a drink."

"Shall we go to Xita where we can find the Korean town?"

"I... don't usually go to Korean town."

"I have a friend who is running a Karaoke there. I want to help his business. Let's go to his Karaoke, please?"

"Haha. Sure, why not? Let's go to Xita."

The Karaoke that Suk-Ho brought Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok to was located in the basement level. Its building was old, and it had many rooms. Gun-Ho saw several half-naked women in the hall, who seemed to work there. The Karaoke was selling liquor and maybe it was providing some other services by those women.

Once they sat in a room, Suk-Ho called for a female worker in a loud voice and said,

"Ask the owner to come to this room. I've brought a very important client here. Ask him to come quickly."

A moment later, Suk-Ho's friend came into the room. He was wearing a red shirt.

"Hey, you are here."

"Hey, I came with my friends. This is the person who is running a big factory in Cheonan City and who also owns a huge building in Gangnam District."

"Hello. Thank you for coming."

"How's your business?"

"It's so so. The market is not very good these days."

Suk-Ho placed his order grandly,

"Hey, Mr. Owner! Bring us a bottle of western liquor and three girls who are the

most beautiful in this store."

"Okay. What kind of western liquor is on your mind?"

Suk-Ho looked at Gun-Ho's face.

"What would you like to drink, President Goo?"

"You choose one, anything you like, Suk-Ho."

"How do you like Chivas Regal?"

"Sure. That's good."

"Hey, bring us a Chivas Regal and girls."

"No problem!"

A moment later, a staff brought Chivas Regal along with small dishes such as fruits and dried food. Three girls came into the room as well. They were half-naked.

"Come on girls. Have a seat here with us!"

The three girls sat next to Gun-Ho, Min-Hyeok, and Suk-Ho. Gun-Ho couldn't say the girls were pretty. They were short and not good-looking at all, and their faces were covered with a thick layer of makeup. Their perfume was strong. They were Korean Chinese. Gun-Ho wanted to finish this "gathering" as soon as he could.

After taking a few glasses of liquor, Suk-Ho started slow dancing with one of the girls while embracing the girl. He must be very drunk already.

"You girls, have you heard of Itaewon Town in Seoul City? I made huge money there."

"Is that true, oppa?"

"Of course! Ask these gentlemen sitting right there. I'm telling the truth!"

Gun-Ho looked at Min-Hyeok's face, who was sitting next to him. Min-Hyeok

was talking in a low voice with the girl next to him. The girl was holding his arm.

"Oppa, you don't like me? Why don't you show me some interest? Look at me, and talk to me, oppa."

The girl next to Gun-Ho sat close to Gun-Ho. Gun-Ho just kept drinking his glass of liquor without saying a word.

When they almost finished the bottle of liquor, Gun-Ho thought it was the time he had to say he wanted to leave before Suk-Ho could even suggest having one more bottle of liquor. He didn't want to stay even one more second there.

"Hey, I guess it's time to go. I feel so tired today since I came all the way from Suzhou to Shenyang. Let's call it a night."

"You are leaving already? I just started, man."

"We can have more later."

Gun-Ho turned on the light of the room. Once the room became bright, Gun-Ho could see the girls more clearly. They were really really not pretty at all. Gun-Ho couldn't understand why these girls chose to work in this field. They could work in a factory which was a healthier job than this. Gun-Ho took out his wallet from the inner pocket of his jacket.

"Thank you for today. Please take this."

Gun-Ho placed two 200 Yuan on the table for the girls.

"Oppa, you are awesome."

The girls gave a kiss on Gun-Ho's cheek before leaving the room. Gun-Ho could hear the girls laughing outside the door.

Suk-Ho pouted.

"Hey, Gun-Ho Goo! I just started having fun. I liked the girl who was sitting next to me."

"I'm sorry, but I'm so exhausted today, and I have to get up early tomorrow morning to go to Dandong City to Economic Development Zone. Where do we stay tonight?"

"It's at the Crown Plaza Hotel on Taishan Road. It's close to Beiling (where Hong Taiji's tomb is located) Park. You can take a tour there before you leave tomorrow."

"I don't know if we will have time for a tour tomorrow."

Three men walked out of the Karaoke building. Many people were still on the street, and they seemed to be having fun.

"Well, Suk-Ho, I guess I will see you when I see you. We are heading to the hotel now. You don't have to come to the hotel tomorrow. We will go to the airport on our own."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah. I wish you success in your new business. Thank you for today."

The following day, Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok arrived at Dandong Economic Development Zone. It was after 1 pm. The deputy director person greeted them with excitement.

"It's really nice to meet you. We do welcome Korean businessmen fervently."

Gun-Ho gave his business card to the deputy director.

"This development zone is located on the riverside of Amrok River facing Sinuiju City in North Korea. That's why we also call this area Dandong Border Economic Cooperation Zone."

320 Seukang Li's Suggestion 3 – Part 1

The deputy director of Dandong Border Economic Corporation Zone asked a question to Gun-Ho after looking at Gun-Ho's business card,

"I see you are running an auto parts company in Korea. What is the annual sales revenue of your company?"

"GH Mobile's yearly sales revenue is about 70 to 80 million U.S. dollars. We have another factory in Suzhou City called GH Parts Company, and it is currently generating 4 million dollars per year."

After verifying the size of the company that Gun-Ho owned, the deputy director immediately called for a manager. The manager was a Korean Chinese lady who looked like in her 40s.

"We will give a tour of the economic corporation zone to these gentlemen. Please prepare a vehicle for us."

"Yes, sir."

A moment later, a van that looked like Starex was standing in front of the entrance door.

Gun-Ho, Min-Hyeok, the deputy director, and the manager got in the car. Once they all sat in the car, the deputy director's sales pitch started.

"Dandong Border Economic Corporation Zone is a national-level development zone. In other words, it is a national industrial complex. Its total size is 117 square kilometers, and 30 is currently being developed."

Gun-Ho asked Min-Hyeok in a low voice,

"How large is 30 ?"

"I'm not sure, maybe about the size of Gwacheon City."

Several factories were scattered sparsely in the development zone along the Amrok River.

"If GH Mobile decides to open your business here, we will provide you with tax benefits for more than three years. Everything is affordable here compared to Korea, including labor costs, material costs, and land prices."

"Hmm."

"Port of Dandong is a trading port which is located on the northwest shore of the Amrok River and bordered by the Yellow Sea. It is situated in a very convenient location for transportation and international export business."

"Hmm. Its location is excellent for a business for sure."

This time, the Korean Chinese manager spoke Korean in adding more explanation, with a smile.

"Do you see an island over there? It's Wihwa Island."

"Wihwa Island?"

Gun-Ho asked the driver to stop the car. He wanted to take a closer look at Wihwa Island.

From the bank of Amrok River, Gun-Ho looked at Wihwa Island. It was a river island, and there seemed to be no one living there. It was green with plants and trees.

"Oh... This is the Wihwa Island where the first king of our Joseon dynasty—Yi, Seong-Gye— made his decision to 'turning back the army from Wihwa island.'"

"Damn it. If he didn't turn back the army but crossed the river instead, this Dandong Border Economic Corporation Zone would have been part of Korea. That's a shame."

"Haha. Min-Hyeok, we can't play 'what if' with historical events."

The Korean Chinese manager asked,

"Have you thought of what kind of business you want to open in this area?"

"No, we haven't decided anything yet. We wanted to visit this economic development zone before making any decision."

"Have you thought of doing business with North Korea, by any chance?"

"We haven't thought of it..."

"You have to be extra careful in doing business with North Korea. If you are interested in it, I can introduce some people who are currently doing business with North Korea."

Gun-Ho's eyes widened and he looked at Min-Hyeok's face.

"I recommend you to hear the experiences from the current businessmen who have done business with North Korea before you start your own."

"Min-Hyeok, what do you think? Should we meet with them? I am so curious."

"Will it be okay and safe? The idea of doing something with North Korea gives me the shivers already."

"Let's do it"

Gun-Ho looked at the Korean Chinese manager and said,

"We are going back to South Korea tomorrow. Is it possible to meet with them this evening?"

"Give me one second. Let me make some calls and see what I can do."

The manager called someone.

Min-Hyeok looked worried, and he said,

"Are you sure we want to do this?"

"These people are government workers. They wouldn't deceive us."

The manager came back and said with a smile,

"I've contacted three people, and one of them is in Pyongyang right now. I can arrange a meeting with the other two people. Are you still interested in meeting them? If you are, I will make a reservation with a restaurant."

"Sounds good."

"Okay, then why don't you have fun around the railroad bridge nearby Amrok River? You can take a cruise ship there. We will meet you at Goolyeon Restaurant in Dandong City at 6 pm. Just take a taxi and tell the driver that you want to go to Goolyeon Restaurant, they will take you there."

"Okay."

At the conclusion of the tour, Gun-Ho extended his hand to the deputy director for a handshake.

"Thank you for showing us around. We will think about opening a business here in Dandong development zone and will let you know once we decide."

"You won't regret once you start your business here. Many Korean companies that are currently doing their business here were hesitant at first, but now they are doing great and they are all happy."

"Well, thank you for today."

Gun-Ho gave three nail clipper sets that he purchased from Korea as a gift, to the deputy director.

While waiting for the dinner meeting, Gun-Ho visited a historical site. He looked at the broken Amrok River Bridge which was destroyed during the Korean War. There was a new bridge next to it, and Gun-Ho was told that the new bridge connected China and North Korea. There seemed not much traffic on the bridge that day.

"During the Korean War, the Chinese People's Liberation Army crossed that bridge, huh?"

"That's what I read from a book."

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok took a cruise ship. When the ship approached close to

Sinuiju City in North Korea, the North Korean people waved their hands. They looked a bit outdated including their clothes and hairstyles, but they looked innocent.

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok arrived at Goolyeon Restaurant that evening. The Korean Chinese manager was there already waiting for Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok. She was with two business traders. They were Korean Chinese as well, and they both looked like in their 50s. One of them was an overweight lady. The manager introduced them to Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok.

"This is the president of Samchully Company, and this lady is running a company called Azalea Trading Company. Well, I have to take off now. I have something I need to take care of at home. Have a good time."

The manager left the restaurant after a brief introduction to the people who were doing business with North Korea.

Gun-Ho and Min-Hyeok gave their business cards to two other business persons and they gave theirs to Gun-Ho's party as well.

The food came out, including a deep-fried carp which was huge, and Amrok River beer.

Min-Hyeok took the bottle of Amrok River beer and looked at the label closely.

"Wow. This beer is called Amrok River beer."

The president of Samchully Company said while smiling,

"It's your first time to see Yalujiang (Amrok River) beer?"

"Yes, I've never seen this before."

The lady president of Azalea Trading Company opened the beer bottle.

"Hahaha. Try some. It's good."

The beer tasted good and it was cool.

"So, you want to do some trading business with North Korea?"

These people were Korean Chinese, but their Korean accents were more like North Korean's, maybe because they often visited North Korea.

"We haven't done it before, but if it could bring good money, I am interested."

"You should take every precaution you could think of in doing so. The people of North Korea can be very deceitful, especially with South Koreans."

"Really?"

"You should use an agent instead of dealing with them directly. If you want to do a joint venture or other business, you probably want to work with them through people like us as your agent. Once the North Korean co-venturer learn that their business partner is from South Korea, it would become really hard to make them pay their portion of the investment. They think it is okay to take some money from South Koreans since South Koreans are wealthy."

"Hmm. Is that right?"

321 Seukang Li's Suggestion 3 – Part 2

Min-Hyeok Kim who was drinking his glass of beer asked,

"We are in the auto parts manufacturing industry. Is it one of the items we can trade with North Korea?"

"If it is an auto part of Chinese vehicles, then yes. But it's for a part for Korean cars, then no. Currently, there is no Korean car in North Korea."

"Hmmm... What sorts of business items will be good then?"

"Construction materials are good. The last stage materials, I think you call them interior materials in Korea, right? North Korea is short of these materials. Their demands are high. I made good money last year by selling the interior materials to North Korea. I have a condo in Pyongyang and two housemaids are working for me."

"Hmmm, construction materials... What about construction heavy equipment?"

The Samchully Company's president waved his hand showing his strong opposition to the idea while having his fish dish.

"North Korea is now suffering a severe gas shortage. So, they wouldn't be able to use equipment anyway, even though they have one."

"Hmm."

"Retired tires are okay since oils can be derived from old tires."

"What about minerals? Like coal, iron, etc?"

"Minerals are good. Farm produces or fish products are good too. One thing you need to note is that these products should be exported from Nampo Port in North Korea. If you move those products to Dandong before exporting them to South Korea, then those products would become produces of China, not produces of

North Korea."

"I see. So, we can get a certificate of origin with North Korea's name as long as the products leave from Nampo Port before reaching South Korea."

"That's right. Once you bring them to Dandong, you can't have your certificate of origin issued."

Gun-Ho felt full after having a beer with several dishes.

"Thank you for today. I've learned a lot."

"If you decide to work together, just let me know. I am highly knowledgeable about the trade with North Korea, and I know every path from Sinuiju City to Pyongyang. Also, I have a broad connection with a lot of important people in Pyongyang."

"Thank you again for staying with us until late at night."

Gun-Ho gave them the nail clipper sets he brought from Seoul, as a gift.

He was in a taxi heading to the hotel when he received a call from Seukang Li.

"I was wondering if you safely arrived in Korea."

"Oh, I haven't left for Korea yet. I'm in Dandong City right now."

"Dandong?"

"Yes. The deputy director of Dandong Border Economic Corporation Zone invited me to visit their development zone. So, I am on the way to the hotel after visiting him."

"Dandong Border Economic Corporation Zone is a national industrial complex."

"They are saying that if I open a business there, they will give me lots of benefits like taxes."

"Their prices for the land and labor are very reasonable; however, I'm not sure if it is the right location for an auto parts business. Auto manufacturers are all located on the east coast."

"You're right. That's why I gathered some information about a trade business with North Korea."

"A trade business?"

"That doesn't sound so promising, does it?"

"Well, I am not a businessman, but a government worker, so I don't know much about business. However, it reminded me of what the economics professor—Jien Wang said the other day."

"What did he say?"

"He said, if you want to make money, you'd better start your business in an area where money and people are driven to."

"The area where money and people are driven to... That sounds right."

Gun-Ho then thought that the Dandong area was not that kind of area.

'For now, I will have to do my business in the area where a lot of people and money are staying. I'm okay with setting my mind that I came all the way to Dandong City for a pleasure trip.'

The following day, Gun-Ho came back to Korea via Shenyang City from Dandong City, and Min-Hyeok took a direct flight from Dandong City to Shanghai.

When he arrived at Incheon International Airport, Gun-Ho made a call to President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

"President Shin, I just came back from China. I'm at the Incheon International Airport."

"Oh, really?"

"I asked Director Kang to get a price quote for the interior renovation of the basement space in GH Building in Sinsa Town."

"Oh, someone is moving in there? It's already rented out?"

"No. I'm thinking of opening an art gallery there as you suggested the other day."

"That's great."

"I'm planning to redo the entire interior. But since this is an art gallery, I believe the lighting is very important. I'd like to have your professional opinion on it."

"Where do we meet? I can come right now."

"If you are not busy, please come to GH Building in Sinsa Town. I think I can get there within two hours."

"Okay. I'm on my way."

Gun-Ho arrived at his office of GH Development in Sinsa Town.

"How are you? Is everything good here?"

"Yes, sir. Here is a price quote for the basement interior renovation. We usually get several price quotes from multiple remodeling companies, but for now, I got one from one company. So you can get a rough idea about how much it would cost to remodel that space."

"President Shin from GH Media will be here soon. She used to work in an art gallery before. I think she can give us some professional opinion and advice."

"Oh, really? She used to work at an art gallery. No wonder why she looked so sophisticated. By the way, sir, you look so tired today."

"I actually came here straight from the airport after visiting Dandong and Shengyang City in China. I guess I drank too much Chinese liquor."

The secretary—Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh brought a cup of hot green tea to Gun-Ho. After having the tea, Gun-Ho felt better.

While looking at the price quote that Director Kang brought to him, Gun-Ho commented,

"It's quite pricey."

"That's right. Because the place was used for a sauna business, there are lots of

demolition works to do, according to the contractors."

While having a conversation with Director Kang, President Shin came into the office.

"Sir, you must feel very tired. You just came back from China. We could have met maybe tomorrow after you take your rest."

Secretary Yeon-Soo Oh brought another cup of green tea for President Shin and placed it on the table next to her.

"Is this lady Ms. Yeon-Soo Oh?"

"Yes, ma'am."

Yeon-Soo responded since she was standing there,

"I'm GH Media's President Shin. We spoke on the phone several times for the letters that I had to send to Amazon.com. You translated the letters into English for me. It's really nice to finally meet you in person."

"Nice to meet you, too, ma'am."

"You are not just fluent in English, but you are so pretty."

"Thank you."

"You have a nice boss, right? President Goo is a decent person."

"Yes, ma'am."

Yeon-Soo Oh smiled and left the office after giving her a deep bow.

I went to the Chinese avant-garde art exhibition in Shanghai."

"Oh, you did? I really wanted to go there."

"I also talked with Director Seukang Li."

"What did the two of you talked about?"

"He suggested me to host an art exhibition in Korea, on the Chinese avant-garde art with the name of GH Media."

"What? Avant-garde art exhibition here?"

President Shin's eyes widened in surprise and looked at Gun-Ho.

322 Meeting with Top Star – Part 1

Gun-Ho called for Director Kang to his office again, while President Jeong-Sook Shin was still in his office.

"I have something that I'd like to talk to you both."

"Okay, sir."

The two people prepared a pen and a paper to take notes as Gun-Ho continued to talk,

"Let's start the renovation work in the basement. We will open an art gallery there. Even though we work with a general contractor for the overall basement renovation, you probably will need to work with other interior companies that specialize in specific fields, such as lighting. Some parts of the interior will require specific professional skills. To cover the cost of the renovation, we will use the reserve for depreciation of the building. We will replenish the reserve once the art gallery starts generating revenue."

"Understood, sir."

"Once the new interior is completed, GH Development will lease the space to GH Media, and GH Media will operate the art gallery."

"Yes, sir."

"We will make a formal lease contract for it. The security deposit will be 20 million won and the monthly rent will be 2 million won. The rent will be adjusted later as the gallery would gradually increase its revenue."

"Yes, sir."

"For the art gallery's security deposit, I will lend it to GH Media as its owner."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho rubbed his eyes before he continued to talk. He looked tired.

"Director Kang."

"Yes, sir."

"Please submit the application to the Seoul city hall for our rooftop renovation. We will make it green."

"Yes, sir."

"50% of the renovation cost will be subsidized by the city hall, and we will use the building reserve for depreciation to pay the remaining 50%. Leave the space, about 30 pyung as we will make a small space for a business."

"Oh, we are building a small space there? Okay, will do, sir."

"The water tank is currently on the ninth floor, right?"

"Yes. It's not on the rooftop, but on the ninth floor."

"If so, we will make the business space a bit larger. Make it 40 pyung instead of 30 pyung then."

"Okay, sir."

"Do we need to get a permit for the construction even though it would be a temporary small building on the rooftop?"

"Yes, we have to. Unless we are building a tent, we need to get a permit."

"Okay. Then please apply for the permit right after the rooftop garden is completed."

"Yes, sir."

"Once the small building is completed, we will then decide what we want to do with that space. We can either open a book café or a pub. We will discuss it later."

"Yes, sir."

"Do you have any questions?"

President Jeong-Sook Shin spoke while placing her pen and note on the table,

"I've already reserved a gallery for Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition. It would be really nice if we could host the exhibition in our new future gallery, but I guess we won't be able to."

"That's okay. It will take time to finish the interior anyway. Which gallery did you pick for Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition?"

"We chose Sotdae Gallery in Insa Town. Once we receive the paintings from Mr. Ding Feng, I will then send out the information to the press."

"What about the painting frames? Are we doing it here in Korea?"

"Yes. We found a frame service provider in the Samgakji area. The last time when Mr. Ding Feng visited here, I went to see that service provider with him."

"I see."

"The Sotdae Gallery is not a large gallery size-wise, but they have an excellent control system on humidity and lightning. Before we start the interior renovation of our art gallery, I do recommend Director Kang to visit the Sotdae Gallery. It can be a very good example."

"Oh, me? Sure... I will do that."

"What if we wouldn't be able to sell all of Mr. Ding Feng's paintings that we would display at the exhibition?"

"I strongly doubt it, but if that happens, we can do a traveling art exhibition in other cities like Gwangju City or Daegu City."

"Hmm."

"The translation work on the history book that we brought from China is completed. Chief Editor Jae-Sik Moon is currently editing and refining the translated version."

"Oh, the book with the title of 'Is Cao Cao a hero or a villain?' or something?"

"That's the book."

Director Kang laughed, who was listening to the conversation while standing next to them.

"The book's title is 'Is Cao Cao a hero or a villain?' It sounds like a very interesting book."

"President Shin, once the book is published, please send one to Director Kang, too."

"Sure, will do, sir. Hahaha."

"It would be nice if I could have lunch with you today since President Shin came all the way to our office in Sinsa Town to visit us, but I feel so tired because of the trip to China."

"Don't mind us, sir. You do look exhausted and you need a good rest."

Gun-Ho bought a bottle of Ssanghwa-Tang* before heading to his home—TowerPalace.

The next morning, Gun-Ho went to work at the factory in Jiksan Town, Cheonan City. The first thing that he did that morning was to preside over a meeting for the executives.

President Song, the internal auditor, the research chief officer, the general affairs director, and Director Jong-Suk Park attended the meeting.

The research center's chief officer started his report.

"We have applied for a patent for those two items with GH Mobile's name. The process will take some time until we get patent approval."

President Song added with a smile,

"Getting a product patented usually affects the price of a KOSDAQ registered company's stock. It would go up."

The internal auditor started his report on the status of the company's debt. Some

of the debts were paid with the company's recent sales profit.

"How much debt do we currently have in total?"

"It's 65 billion won, sir."

"Do you think we can reduce our debt ratio to the level above the industrial average?"

"It would be difficult to do so by the end of this year, but we can possibly achieve that goal by next year."

It was the general affairs director's turn to make a report.

"We have a meeting for the small and medium-sized business owners today. It's for the business owners in the North Chungnam Province."

"Mr. General Affairs Director, you attend the meeting for me. You can just tell them that the president is out on a business trip abroad. Director Jong-Suk Park, do you have anything to add before we end this meeting?"

"No, sir."

"We are still doing the My Machine program in the production field, right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Everyone did a good job. Our company is doing a lot better than before, but we still have lots of work we need to achieve. I hope that all of you will do your best in doing your job. Okay, this is all for today. Thank you all."

GH Mobile had many mid-level management employees such as managers and assistant managers, and there was another regular meeting including those mid-level managers. But, Gun-Ho hadn't attended the meeting. President Song usually presided that meeting.

Note.

*Ssanghwa-tang—A traditional Korean tea which is known to help recover from fatigue

323 Meeting with Top Star – Part 2

After having lunch with the GH Mobile's executives, Gun-Ho headed to Dyeon Korea. Gun-Ho's Land Rover was entering Eumbong Town in Asan City after passing Baekseok Town in Cheonan City. This was the necessary path to take, in order to reach his factory in Asan City.

"I feel so sleepy after lunch."

Gun-Ho parked his car around Embong Lake. There was a very attractive café near the lake.

"I think I need to have a cup of coffee before I continue to drive."

Gun-Ho went into the café and had his coffee while looking out at the lake.

"This is a nice lake view. I feel so refreshed."

There was a person in distant, who was fishing at the lake.

"I thought that fishing is prohibited in this area. Is he local?"

While looking at the fisherman, Gun-Ho thought of the fishing site in Pocheon City, which he often used to go in the past.

"Is Chairman Lee from Cheongdam Town still going to the Pocheon fishing site by himself? If he is, he would probably feel very lonely by now. Well, he actually started his fishing at that fishing site way before Jong-Suk and I joined him there."

Gun-Ho missed Chairman Lee. Chairman Lee was a very important figure to Gun-Ho, who greatly influenced him in finding his path of life.

"Maybe I should ask Jong-Suk to go fishing with me to Pocheon fishing site. It has been forever. Or, not. He is not alone anymore. He has his fiancée living with him and I shouldn't interrupt their happy moment."

Gun-Ho looked at his calendar.

"Today is Monday. I can go to the fishing site this Sunday. I'd better go there by myself without Jong-Suk."

Once Gun-Ho arrived at Dyeon Korea, he presided over a meeting. Since there were not many workers in Dyeon Korea, everyone attended the meeting.

Director Dong-Chan Kim started his report first.

"We determined the price of Dyeon Korea's product. Our price is 4,800 won per kilogram. This price reflects both direct costs and indirect costs."

"So, it's 96,000 won per bag."

"Correct. It's a bit more expensive than rice."

The workers at the meeting all laughed as Director Kim brought in the price of rice out of nowhere as a comparative price with their product price.

"So, it's 4,800,000 won per pallet."

"Right. It's before VAT though."

"Once we add VAT, then it would be more than 5 million won... We will need to reduce our product cost in order to drop our product price below 5 million won after we include VAT. That would attract more buyers. Don't you think?"

Mr. Adam Castler chipped in.

"Not necessarily. From my experience in other countries including Mexico and Spain, if the product price is low, people think the product is probably low in quality as well."

"Hmm."

"We will then price the product as 4.8 million per ton for now, and we will adjust it as we observe the market reaction."

Mr. Adam Castler added,

"We currently have two machines. Dyeon America will ship two more next week."

"Are they coming in through Busan Port again like last time?"

"I suppose so."

"I guess we will handle the shipment better this time since this is our second time dealing with it. How is the sale?"

"We have sold about ten tons so far. We will receive the payment by the end of this month through B2B."

"Hmm. Anyone has anything to add?"

Once he made sure no one had anything to add, Gun-Ho ended the meeting.

Once he came back to his office, Gun-Ho fell into thought.

'Since I have several companies that I need to run, I am traveling between the companies to get reports for each company. This is not efficient. I think I should set up a system where I can receive all the reports in one place. Once I get married and start a family, this current arrangement won't work.'

'I can let President Song run GH Mobile. For Dyeon Korea, once the company becomes stable, Director Dong-Chan Kim can handle the daily operation without me. I can then move back to Seoul and take care of the building in Sinsa Town. What if everything gets messed up during my absence? I do trust President Song and Director Kim, but I guess this is not good timing for the change. Okay, let's wait until the company goes public. Once the company is registered with KOSDAQ, I can have professional CEOs run the companies, and I can move back to Seoul.'

'If I move back to Seoul, I will run GH Development, but its size is currently too small with a few employees. Maybe I should expand GH Media as a multimedia company. But the problem is that I don't know anything about the field since all of my work experience is with factories. Do I need to hire a professional CEO for the multimedia company? Well, I don't want to spend my personal money there. I'd better use any profits being generated from the companies for any further investment.'

After a lot of thoughts about his business, he turned on the TV.

There was a commercial on TV.

"Too many commercials. Let me try another channel."

Gun-Ho was scanning through different TV channels when he suddenly stopped it. It was a cosmetics commercial, and Seol-Bing was there. Seol-Bing was saying,

"My skin is hydrated all the time."

Gun-Ho looked at the commercial closely. Seol-Bing was indeed beautiful.

Gun-Ho turned off the TV and closed his eyes. He could see Seol-Bing.

'I want to see her again. How can I possibly make an occasion to meet with her? She is a top star. She won't meet with me just because I call her and ask for the meeting. I guess there must be a lot of rich young dudes who have rich daddies, who are trying to approach her.'

Gun-Ho thought of the BM Entertainment's planning manager, and he looked for his business card.

"I don't really like this guy. He smiles with his eyes like a girl. But, well, what other choices do I have? Let me just call him."

Gun-Ho dialed the number shown on the business card.

"Hello?"

"This is BM Entertainment's planning manager. How can I help you?"

"Hi. This is Gun-Ho Goo."

"Gun-Ho Goo? I'm sorry I can't recall your name. Who is this?"

It seemed that he had forgotten Gun-Ho's name.

"This is Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile."

"Huh? GH Mobile? Oh, hi, sir! It's really good to hear from you, sir."

"Are you still traveling to China these days too?"

"Yes, I do from time to time. The performance we did last time in China was a success. Our president really appreciates your help for it."

"That's nice."

"To what do I owe the pleasure of your call, sir?"

"I was wondering if you have Ms. Seol-Bing's phone number."

"Seol-Bing? Can I ask you why you need her phone number?"

"Oh, I just have something to ask her."

"Could you ask me instead of her? I will deliver your message to her."

"Well, I prefer to talk to her directly."

"I'm sorry, sir. Our company policy doesn't allow me to give out our celebrities' phone numbers. If you need to talk about GH Mobile's commercial, you can talk to me, sir."

Gun-Ho thought that if this entertainment manager was sitting next to him, he would probably have hit the back of his head.

"It's not about a commercial. I'm opening an art gallery in my building in Sinsa Town, and I'm inviting high profile people and celebrities to the opening ceremony. And I'm wondering if Ms. Seol-Bing could come to the opening ceremony."

"That's... umm... there is a risk to be exposed to paparazzi..."

"Even though paparazzi take photos of Seol-Bing at an art gallery, that wouldn't work adversely for her. It would rather help her build an elegant image. Well, if you don't like the idea, that's fine."

"No, sir. I can't give out our celebrities' phone numbers. If I do, they get really upset with me. But, I think I can give her number to you, sir, only you. Please don't tell her that you have received her number from me."

"Don't worry about it."

"Seol-Bing's phone number is 010-xx-xxxx."

"Thank you. Why don't you come to my art gallery's opening ceremony as well?"

"Thank you."

324 Chairman Lee's Vacation Home 1

– Part 1

After receiving Seol-Bing's phone number from the entertainment company's planning manager, Gun-Ho thought of whether he wanted to make a call to her or not. He thought inviting her to his art gallery's opening ceremony seemed to be a lame excuse to make a personal call to her; especially, he didn't get her number from her directly but from someone else. Moreover, she might be at work doing a film shoot or something. If so, she wouldn't be able to take his call anyway. Gun-Ho finally decided to send her a text message instead of calling her.

[Are you still in Japan for your photoshoot? I will be in Japan on the 22nd of this month. I have something that I'd like to ask you. Can we meet at a café in New Otani Hotel in Tokyo at 5 pm that day? I can adjust my schedule if you prefer another time. I will be waiting for your response. – Gun-Ho Goo from GH Mobile –]

After sending the text message to Seol-Bing, he regretted it for a second; he felt somewhat embarrassed. And then he realized he wouldn't be able to cancel the text message because it was already after he pressed the send button.

Gun-Ho looked at the calendar.

'I gave her the day of the 22nd of this month. I can't leave now, but I can go to Tokyo next week. She might not show up, but it's okay. I would understand if she wouldn't want to go all the way to Japan just to meet with me. I asked her to meet me in Japan instead of Korea because I know celebs don't want to be exposed to the public. Not a whole lot of people would recognize her if we meet in Japan. But many Korean tourists stay in the New Otani Hotel. Hmm. Maybe I should have picked a different hotel.'

'Well, I feel sorry for Mori Aikko at this point. New Otani Hotel in Akasaka, Tokyo is a special place for her and myself. Should I worry about running into her at the hotel? Well, since Mori Aikko travels a lot to provinces for her dance performance, I don't think she would be at the New Otani Hotel.'

Gun-Ho felt great for some reason. He just felt happy even with the thoughts of Seol-Bing and Mori Aikko.

'Is it okay for me to be like this? People say, if a man has a fate that tells that he would make a lot of money in his life, then he would have lots of women as well. On the contrary, a man with a fate of no money would have no woman in his life either. Since I now have some money, am I trying to get more than one woman? Well, but technically, I can't say I have my woman now. Min-Hyeok Kim and Jon-Suk Park, they all have their women. Jae-Sik also has someone who he is living with. Other highschool friends of mine such as Won-Chul, Byeong-Chul Hwang, and even Suk-Ho Lee are all married, and they even have kids. I'm the only one with no woman. How come?'

While Gun-Ho was deep in thought, Director Yoon, who was in charge of general management, entered his office, dispersing all of Gun-Ho's thoughts.

"Sir, I have something that I need to report to you."

Director Yoon said as he pulled out a paper from his folder.

"Go ahead."

"We are expecting to receive the machine no. 3 and no.4."

"That's right."

"I'd like to get 100 tons of raw materials when we get our machines."

"Did you say 100 tons? Do we have enough space to store them?"

"We do have more than enough space. We can store up to 300 tons of raw materials in the three-tier metal shelf that Director Jong-Suk Park and the new manager built last time."

"Have you talked with Mr. Adam Castler already?"

"Yes, sir. I got Mr. Adam Castler's approval already, along with Director Dong-Chan Kim's signature."

"Okay, then. Who's going to handle the import?"

"We need to pass muster at customs in Busan location, so we requested the service to the same customs compliance service provider we worked with last time. After we receive all the necessary machines, we can use Pyeongtaek Port instead of Busan location to receive the shipment of the raw materials."

Gun-Ho looked at the paper again.

"It's not a nominal amount. It's FOB price, right?"

"Right. Once we start getting payments from our customers for the products we already sent to them, our financial situation will look better. The first payment will start next month."

"How are the American engineers doing? Do they have any requests or complaints?"

"The general affairs manager is planning to take them to Seoul this Sunday for a tour with his car. His English has improved a lot. I guess because he is young, he learns quickly."

"Provide him with the gas and meal cost for the tour on Sunday."

"Yes, sir."

It was Sunday.

Gun-Ho headed to Pocheon City with his fishing gear. He didn't tell anyone that he was going to the fishing site in Pocheon City.

"I wonder if Chairman Lee would be there."

Gun-Ho picked up some Gimbab with a beverage for himself on the way to the fishing site.

Chairman Lee was not found anywhere at the fishing site.

Gun-Ho started fishing by himself.

Gun-Ho prefers lure fishing rather than bait fishing. After throwing out his lure in the water, he started walking along the lake holding his fishing rod.

"Where are all the fishes? Is it their nap time?"

Gun-Ho went around the lake, and he didn't see any single fish. Maybe because it was lunchtime.

"This is exhausting and makes me sweat. Let's just have lunch over there under the tree."

Gun-Ho retrieved his fishing rod and started walking towards the tree. At that moment, Gun-Ho saw two men who were wearing a straw hat. They were walking toward the lake.

"Oh, that's Chairman Lee."

Gun-Ho felt so happy to see him, and he yelled at him in delight,

"Mr. Chairman Lee!"

Chairman Lee seemed to recognize Gun-Ho even in a distance. He started waving his hand to Gun-Ho. Chairman Lee had his own fishing spot that he had always used. He put his fishing gears in that spot, and said,

"You came this far from Cheonan City!"

"Hello, sir. How have you been? Mr. Manager Gweon, how are you?"

"How come you came this far? There must be other good fishing sites around Cheonan City. If you go to Gong-Ju or Buyeo Town, there are tons of nice fishing sites that are not very crowded."

"This is my favorite fishing site since I can see you and Chairman Lee here."

"How's your business?"

"It's going well."

"Sir, are you coming here every week?"

"Yeah, pretty much. Since it's close to my vacation home, I come here very often."

"Oh, that's right. Your vacation home is around here."

"Right. It's about 2 or 3 kilometers away from here."

"I remember Manager Gweon talked to me about your vacation home. I was told it is huge. How large is it?"

"Well, I think it's about 1,000 pyung."

"Huh? 1,000 pyung, sir?"

Gun-Ho felt disappointed in Chairman Lee for a second.

'I know he is rich, but he shouldn't occupy 1,000 pyung for himself just for his vacation home. It's three times larger than GH Building. I didn't know he was an extravagant type.'

"What about the floor space?"

"It's about 200 pyung."

"Huh? 200 pyung?"

"Why don't you come and visit me there? After I'm done fishing here today, I will stop by my vacation home. You can come with me."

Gun-Ho remembered what Manager Gweon told him the other day.

He had said, "The reason why I accompany Chairman Lee even on Sundays is because of his vacation home. I started admiring him when I saw his vacation home."

Gun-Ho thought that maybe Manager Gweon was extravagant too.

'He used to serve in the military. But he admires someone because of that person's huge vacation home?'

325 Chairman Lee's Vacation Home 1

– Part 2

Gun-Ho pictured a vacation home where Chairman Lee was drinking a glass of champagne while looking at his beautifully landscaped garden. He must have a custodian who stayed in his vacation home 24/7 to handle all the work there since it was a huge vacation home that was 1,000 pyung large.

"I envy you, Chairman Lee. I'm sure that not many people have an opportunity to own a large vacation home like that, especially in this area with clean air."

"You think so? Hahaha. I don't have anything much to do at my age. I do like to have fun in my vacation home."

Chairman Lee said he brought Gimbab that was enough for two people, and he wanted to share it with Gun-Ho.

"Oh, I brought my own Gimbab too. Let's eat together."

Gun-Ho went to his Land Rover and took out a picnic mat from the trunk. After a moment, three people were sitting on the picnic mat, and they were having Gimbab with a beverage.

"President Goo, do you like this?"

"Do you mean here, this place?"

"Yes. I feel so calm and peaceful whenever I come to this place."

"Right. It is a very serene and nice place."

"Whenever I get a headache at work, I come here and I get inspired. I do often visit this place not just because my vacation home is nearby, but I come here to give a deep thought on my business. Sometimes, I get a brilliant idea for my business while I'm trying to catch some fish here."

"Oh, I see."

"President Goo, why don't you catch an enormous idea while you are aiming to catch a bass today? Well, maybe it would be difficult since you do lure fishing. You might not be able to focus on your thoughts while walking around to do lure fishing."

While having Gimbab, Gun-Ho and Chairman Lee talked about things going on in their lives. Gun-Ho told him that he was planning to open an art gallery in his building in Sinsa Town, and Chairman Lee seemed to find it very interesting.

"Sir, I will take a walk for my lure fishing. I hope you catch a huge fish today. I mean a fish for your business."

Chairman Lee grinned.

"I will try."

At the end of the day, Gun-Ho caught a bass, and Chairman Lee caught four carps.

"Let's call it a day. My hip and waist start hurting."

Chairman Lee began to retrieve his fishing gear. Since he had only four carps, Gun-Ho thought he would just let them go, but Chairman Lee put those carps in a plastic container that he brought.

"Are you going to make a spicy fish soup with those carps tonight? Why don't you take my bass and add to it?"

As Gun-Ho said it, he put his bass in Chairman Lee's plastic container.

"I am actually going to have carp porridge tonight. A carp has lots of fishbones, but if you let them simmer for a long time, their fishbones melt. That makes a very good porridge."

Gun-Ho thought Chairman Lee was so cheap. Even though he was so rich, he caught fish himself and made porridge with them.

'Chairman Lee probably has bad teeth now, given his age. That's why he enjoys porridge.'

Gun-Ho started retrieving his fishing tools as well.

"Sir, are you going straight back to Cheongdam Town?"

"No, I will have to stop by my vacation home here, so I can release these fish into my pond."

"Oh, you have a pond in your vacation home?"

"Of course. It's about 300 to 400 pyung large. I landscaped around the pond with water plants. It looks really nice."

Gun-Ho thought,

'Wow. It would be really nice to have a drink in a vacation home which is 1,000 pyung large while looking out at a beautifully landscaped pond. That's a really great life.'

"If you are heading to your vacation home, I'd like to take a look at it too. The land is 1,000 pyung, and the house is 200 pyung, with a pond that is 300 to 400 pyung large. I really want to see them. I'm sure the beauty of your vacation home will refresh my mind."

"Sure. Come with me. I don't really invite people over my vacation home, but you are like my family now. Of course, you are more than welcome to come with me."

Gun-Ho drove while following Chairman Lee's Genesis. After going through some narrow concrete roads, his Genesis stopped in front of a majestic house in a forest. Gun-Ho could see the yard through the gaps between the front door panels. There were several trees like pine trees and maple trees. They looked really nice.

"It is indeed a huge vacation home."

Gun-Ho followed Chairman Lee and Manager Gweon to the front yard.

Once he was inside the vacation home, a lot of children started pouring out into the yard.

"Grandpa is here!"

"Hello, my children!"

Gun-Ho was dumbfounded by the unexpected scene.

Many of those children were kids with some disabilities, either physically or intellectually.

"Oh, my gosh. I totally misunderstood Chairman Lee."

It was obviously not his personal vacation home. It was a home for children with special needs.

"This place... Are you running this, sir?"

"Of course. I am personally operating this. It has been about twenty years."

"How many children are there?"

"About thirty. The maximum number of kids I had was fifty. Do you remember that GH Media's President Jeong-Sook Shin recognized me as the father of Professor Hye-Sook Lee at Sejong University?"

"Yes, I remember that."

Professor Hye-Sook Lee grew up here too. She was an orphan. She was a very smart kid. When Hye-Sook was growing up here, the kids used to call me father, but now these kids call me grandfather. Hahaha."

Gun-Ho didn't know what to say. He was extremely impressed and became emotional.

'Oh, my... Chairman Lee is more than a person who I can just admire for his business success. He is such a great person that I can't even stand next to him.'

Gun-Ho remembered what Master Park, who was in Goesan Town, said the other day.

He said, "If you see chairman Lee, please say hi to him for me. He is a very good friend than he looks."

"Grandpa, this is smaller than the ones you caught last time."

"I will get a bigger one next time; I promise, like this big!"

As Chairman Lee talked with one of the children, he gave a kiss to the child's cheek. The child talked weird. He probably had a speaking disability.

"What is that fish? It looks funny."

"Oh, that one is called a bass. Do you see the mister standing over there? He caught it."

"This one is huge."

The children seemed to be having a lot of fun looking at the fish.

"Let's release these fish into the pond until our cooking lady comes back from the supermarket. She will make a nice carp porridge for us."

"I like pizza better than carp porridge."

"If you want to grow taller, you need to eat carp porridge. You can't have pizza all the time."

"Do you promise?"

"Has your grandpa ever lied to you?"

While watching Chairman Lee and the children and listening to their conversation, Gun-Ho's eyes started welling with tears for some reason.

326 Chairman Lee's Vacation Home 2

– Part 1

On the way home from the fishing site in Pocheon City, Gun-Ho fell into various thoughts.

'I've been focusing on making money until now without thinking of other values in life. I need to be a good person like Chairman Lee, not just a rich man.'

'I think I need to do some rewarding work, too. Chairman Lee had been raising children with special needs for twenty years, but he had never mentioned it before.'

Even after he lied down in his bed in his apartment in Buldang Town, Cheonan City, Gun-Ho couldn't fall asleep.

The next morning, after spending his time at the fishing site the day before, Gun-Ho felt refreshed.

Gun-Ho stopped by GH Mobile to quickly review the reports before heading to Dyeon Korea in Asan City. Once he arrived at Dyeon Korea, Gun-Ho, at first, looked around the production worksite.

The workers who were working with the machines at the production site greeted Gun-Ho. The white-colored raw materials, which were brought in from the U.S., were being reborn after being processed at this production site to other yellow or grey raw materials.

Manager Hee-Yeol Yoo of the production team, who had received the special training by Lymondell Dyeon, explained to Gun-Ho,

"These white-colored raw materials were derived from petroleum. They have no value as a product by themselves. They have very low durability, cold resistance, thermal resistance, and elasticity. We reprocess them by mixing them with 36 other chemicals and make a new raw material which has merchantable quality."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho picked up the yellow raw materials with his hand and looked at them carefully. They are a bit bigger than a rice grain and smaller than a bean.

"What does this number indicate? The one on the bag?"

"It's a product serial number, sir. The first two letters—DK—stands for Dyeon Korea, the first group of numbers shows the shipment date, and the following numbers are the route number and serial number."

"I see."

"So, if we find a defective product, we can trace when this product was made, and who made it, and how it was processed."

"Hmm."

Gun-Ho took a walk around the entire production site before going to his office.

Gun-Ho wanted to have a facility for the children with special needs in Incheon City which was Gun-Ho's hometown.

'Let's plan to establish a foundation for my charity work, which I will start maybe a few years later. I will need to buy a land of about 1,000 pyung just like what Chairman Lee did. It will be difficult to buy land later since the land price keeps going up. I'd better buy a land right now, somewhere around Incheon City. I can keep the land until I am ready to start it. I will build a building after I successfully register GH Mobile and Dyeon Korea with KOSDAQ. I can have my company own the foundation.'

Gun-Ho made a call to the realtor who helped him buy the condo in Guweol Town where his parents were living in.

"Do you handle other real properties, not just condos? I'm interested in purchasing land."

"Yes, I do. What's the purpose of the land that you'd like to purchase? There are lands for commercial buildings and lands for just investment."

"Lands for just investment? Do you mean, if I buy that land, the price of the land will go up?"

"If you buy a farmland close to main roads, the price of that land most likely will go up in the future."

"Someone asked me to look for a land to make it into a facility for people with disabilities."

"Many people find it very unpleasant to have a facility for the disabled near their residence. So if you try to build one in a residential area, you will face vigorous protest. You will need to get a farmland distant from a residential area. However, farmland is supposed to be used for farming only, so, you will need to get a permit to change the purpose, in order to build that sort of facility there."

"Is it hard to get a permit like that?"

"Not really. You just need to pay taxes in addition to other fees."

"Do you have anything on the market, in Incheon?"

"Yes, I do. I actually have a good one in Gyeyang District and another one in Namdong District."

"How large is the one in Namdong District?"

"If you want to build a facility for welfare, I do recommend the one in Namdong District. It's a farmland in Namchon town. It's 1,000 pyung large. It's not close to the main road though, but it's not too distant either. The location is not bad at all. There is a small stream as well. I believe that once the area is developed, the price of the land will easily go up."

"How much is it?"

"Why don't you visit my office; we can discuss it in person. There are so many people who just talk to me on the phone to get all the information they need and never contact me again. I prefer to talk with you in person if you are serious about purchasing it."

"Sure. I will visit your office in the near future. What's your work hours?"

"I stay in my office until 9 pm since I live nearby. I believe, if you want to build a facility like that, the local government will provide the subsidy. I think you'd better do it quickly while they still have funds for it."

"Thank you for letting me know. I will come by your office soon."

Gun-Ho headed to the realtor's office in Guweol Town. He didn't tell his parents that he would be in the area.

"Hello. I spoke with you on the phone yesterday about the farmland in Namchon Town."

"Oh, hi. Thank you for coming, and I'm sorry that I asked you to come all the way to my office. I'm just fed up with all those people who just take information from me through the phone."

"Are you showing me the land too? I think Namchon Town is pretty distant from here."

"Oh, no. A realtor from Namchon Town will show you the land. Realtors' offices are all connected, so I just arrange the showing with another realtor for you."

The realtor picked up the phone and dialed some numbers.

"Hello? Is it Seungil Realtor's Office in Namchon Town? Hi, this is from Guweol Town realtor's office. Do you still have the farmland in Namchon Town? You know the land that was put on the market by the old man with a lump."

"I still have it. Why? Do you have someone who is interested in it?"

"Yes, I have a gentleman here, who is interested in visiting the land. I will send him over to your office. Can you show him the land today?"

"Of course. Send him here. I will show him around."

Gun-Ho went to Seungil Realtor's Office.

A short man, who looked like he was in his late 50s, was waiting for him. He recognized Gun-Ho as the person who came to see the land right away.

"Are you the person who Guweol Realtor's Office sent?"

"Yes, I am."

"Nice to meet you. Shall we go to see the land now? You can ride with me."

Gun-Ho left his Land Rover parked in front of the realtor's office and got in the realtor's car. It was an old Santa Fe. It took about ten minutes to arrive at the land. The area was not developed. Gun-Ho could see vinyl greenhouses here and there. There were farms with peppers and sesames growing on them. The realtor stopped in front of the land where chili peppers were growing.

"This is it. Do you see the borderline there? The land is 1,000 pyung up to the borderline. It's actually 1,020 pyung to be exact. It's not on the main road, but it's on the six-meter wide local road. The location is really nice. You have a small natural stream. There is a bus station about 200 meters from here."

"Hmm."

"If you have money to let sit, this is a good investment property. Its price will go up. It is highly possible that this area will soon be developed."

"How much is it priced?"

327 Chairman Lee's Vacation Home 2

– Part 2

"Those lands that are surrounded by other lands cost about 600,000 won per pyung while the lands like this location are 1.2 million won per pyung."

"That makes this land 1.2 billion won."

"Correct. The landowner already affirmed that he would not negotiate the price. So I guess the land price is firm. Why don't you think about it, and let me know if you decide to take it."

"Okay, will do. I will actually need to think about it."

The realtor gave his business card to Gun-Ho with his phone number on it.

Gun-Ho liked the land.

'The land is in a simple square figure. It's on the six-meter wide road, so it's very accessible with a car. Moreover, the bus station is close. But the price is too high. If the land is really 120 billion won, that means all those farmers in this area are very rich. When I lived here in Incheon City, my family rented a small townhouse just because we didn't have 100 million won at that time. So do Min-Hyeok's and Jae-Sik's families. With 120 billion won, I can purchase five of the Hyundai HomeTown condos that Min-Hyeok recently bought for his parents.'

'Once I purchase this land, I can ask my mom and dad to watch it for me. I don't want someone to cultivate some grains in my land. Also, I need to deter anyone from dumping trash or some construction wastes on the land. After a few years, once the area gets developed, I can build a facility. Even though I own the foundation to run the facility, I can have my sister to actually run it. She has a level-1 certificate of a social worker. I guess she will fit right in the job. Her husband can stop driving a truck doing transportation work for other companies and work with my sister here instead. That would look really nice.'

The following day, Gun-Ho made a purchase contract for the land. He took his

parents to the land to show it.

"I bought this land as an investment. The previous owner is cultivating some chili peppers here. I told him that once he harvests the current peppers, he shouldn't continue to do it any longer. Why don't you come to this land from time to time and see if anyone uses the land."

"I think I want to grow something here, maybe some chives. I heard I can easily sell them."

"Mom, that's hard labor work."

"No, it's okay. I want to use the land. I think I will cultivate some garlic or spring onions with your dad."

Gun-Ho's mother looked excited.

Gun-Ho was driving back to Cheonan City when he received a call from President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media.

"Sir, Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition is finally scheduled. I already sent out the information to the press. You will see the news about his art exhibition in most of the newspapers starting today."

"Did you prepare the information to be on the news?"

"Yes, we prepared them. Actually, the chief editor—Mr. Jae-Sik Moon—wrote the article to be on the newspaper. His writing is so good that I believe they will post it without any problem. While we prepare the article on our own, sending it out to the press was handled by a service provider."

"Good work, President Shin. I will stop by the art exhibition."

"Sir, please send us an orchid plant to the art exhibition venue on the first day of the exhibition with your name on it."

"Well, I will send three of them, not just one, with three different company names: GH Mobile, Dyeon Korea, and GH Development."

"That sounds great. Thank you."

Gun-Ho spent his time in GH Mobile that afternoon. He was reading a newspaper. While Dyeon Korea subscribed to only one economic newspaper since it was a newly opened company, GH mobile received three different newspapers. There was a news article about Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition with one of his oriental paintings.

"So, this was written by Jae-Sik."

[The great artist of the oriental painting from China—Mr. Ding Feng—will host his art exhibition at Sotdae Gallery in Insa Town for the next two weeks starting today. Artist Ding Feng is highly known as the master of northern school literati paintings in Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, etc. His paintings are highly recognized worldwide. This is his very first art exhibition in Korea.

Northern school literati paintings that use a lot of colors are more popular in China while southern school literati paintings are prevalent in Korea. Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition will give an excellent opportunity for art lovers to enjoy northern school literati paintings.]

"Man, Jae-Sik is good."

Jae-Sik's father was a blue-collar labor worker, but he loved writing a poem. Yes, he was a poet. He was not a financially savvy person, and Jae-Sik's family had suffered from poverty. Jae-Sik was bullied during his school years, and his only happy time during those days was when he read cartoon books by himself. Once he entered high school, he read novels all the time, which he borrowed from the school library.

"Well, I guess Jae-Sik was somewhat influenced by his father who used to write a poem. Jae-Sik is doing great as a chief editor."

Gun-Ho closed his eyes and reminisced about his days in his middle school and high school.

Won-Chul Jon was living in a nice condo at that time, and he hung out with Byeong-Chul Hwang and Suk-Ho Lee. Gun-Ho was living in a shabby townhouse, and he was friends with Min-Hyeok and Jae-Sik who had about the same home environment, and Jae-Sik's family lived in a basement of a townhouse. Gun-Ho sometimes spent time with Jong-Suk who was two years younger than him as well since he liked Jong-Suk's mother's Seolleongtang (an

ox bone soup).

Min-Hyeok and Jae-Sik were often beaten up by Won-Chul and Suk-Ho in those days, and they didn't even try to fight back, maybe because of their sense of inferiority which came from the different financial situation of their families. Fortunately, Gun-Ho had a larger frame at that time, maybe because of Jong-Suk's mother's Seolleongtang, and he wasn't often targeted for bullying.

The children at that time didn't call Jae-Sik with his name, but instead, they just called him like, "Hey, basement."

And they often asked Jae-Sik,

"Hey, you, basement! Carry my school bag for me!"

Whenever someone mentioned the word "basement," Jae-Sik lowered his head with his slumped shoulders.

Won-Chul Jo's family lived in a nice condo. His mother was a pharmacist, and she ran her own pharmacy in the town. Byeong-Chul Hwang's parents were both school teachers, and Suk-Ho Lee's father owned a lumber mill. These three people lived in the same condo, and they all went to college in Seoul. Currently, Won-Chul Jo was a manager in a big company; Byeong-Chul Hwang graduated from KAIST and worked as a researcher in a research center in Pangyo. As his parents were both school teachers, Byeong-Chul had the highest grade in high school. Suk-Ho Lee, whose father was running a timber mill at that time, owned a bar at Gyeongridan Street until recently with his parents' financial support, and he was now doing some business in China. Min-Ho Kang, who joined a civic organization, had lived in a different condo. His father was a politician; he was a member of the city council at that time.

Gun-Ho's father was a labor worker in an industrial complex, and then he later worked as a security guard. Min-Hyeok's father was a bus driver, and after he retired, he now drove an art academy shuttle for children. Jae-Sik's father was a labor worker who always wrote a poem, and Jae-Sik hadn't contacted his parents for a while now. His father had a bad credit score and that affected Jae-Sik's life badly.

It seemed like the life of the father and his son looked alike. The son seemed to follow his father's footprints in some way. Surprisingly though, Gun-Ho was the

most successful among these high school friends, and he was running his own companies.

328 Tokyo Sonata 1 – Part 1

It was the day that Gun-Ho asked Seol-Bing to meet him in Tokyo.

It was on Saturday, and he didn't have to tell anyone about his unilateral appointment with Seol-Bing. He could just leave for Tokyo on Friday night and come back on Sunday night.

Fortunately, Mori Aikko had a schedule that day for her concerted dance performance at National Bunraku Theatre in Shinsaibashi, Osaka, so she wouldn't be in Tokyo.

Gun-Ho waited for Seol-Bing at the café in New Otani Hotel in Akasaka, Tokyo, but Seol-Bing didn't show up. Gun-Ho waited until late at night before he gave up.

It was a lonely night in Tokyo for Gun-Ho without Seol-Bing and without Mori Aikko.

Gun-Ho had his wine at the sweet room in New Otani Hotel by himself while looking out of the window at Japan's State Guest House.

Once he came back to Korea, he sent a text message to Seol-Bing.

[I waited for you at the café in New Otani Hotel until late at night. I assume you are very busy. I'd like to set up another appointment with you. I will be in Japan on the 2nd of the next month. If you find it uncomfortable to meet me in public like a café, we can meet on the 18th floor in the New Otani Hotel that day. There is a small meeting room—Gekkyu. I'd like to see you there at 6 pm.]

"I will see if she would appear this time. If she stood me up again this time, I won't be interested in her ever again either."

Gun-Ho stopped by Sotdae Gallery in Insa Town that day.

There was a huge banner hanging at the entrance. It said, "the great artist of northern school literati paintings—Mr. Ding Feng's solo art exhibition."

At the gallery, Mr. Ding Feng was there with a lady who was probably his interpreter. President Jeong-Sook Shin was there too. Gun-Ho could see three orchid plants which he sent, on the floor. There were many other plants that President Jeong-Sook Shin's friends sent as well.

"Congratulations."

Gun-Ho approached Mr. Ding Feng and congratulated him on his solo art exhibition. Mr. Ding Feng seemed to be happy to see Gun-Ho there, and he offered his hand to Gun-Ho for a handshake with a broad smile.

Gun-Ho asked President Jeong-Sook Shin,

"Are you having lots of visitors?"

"Yes, we are. There were tons of people who came to see Mr. Ding Feng's paintings. We sold 10 of his paintings already."

"Wow, really?"

"I think the price is affordable to ordinary people."

Gun-Ho started thinking,

'I guess the profits will at least cover Mr. Ding Feng's travel expenses and the rent of this gallery.'

After visiting Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition, Gun-Ho took KTX (Korea Train Express) at Seoul Station, heading to Cheonan City. The first-class seats had a reclining chair, so Gun-Ho could lean back in his seat and stretch his legs comfortably.

The apartment where Gun-Ho was staying in Cheonan City was situated right across the street from the KTX station.

While heading to his home in Cheonan City, Gun-Ho received a text message. It was from Seol-Bing.

[If you want to talk about an advertisement work, please contact my agency. Its number is 010-xxx-xxxx.]

"Hmm. I guess the entertainment agency manager gave me the correct number of Seol-Bing's phone."

Gun-Ho replied to the text message immediately.

[It's not about an advertisement. I have something that I'd like to ask you personally. As stated in my previous text message, I will be waiting for you at the New Otani Hotel's small meeting room—Gekkyu.]

Gun-Ho went to work at GH Mobile.

President Jang-Hwan Song came to Gun-Ho's office with a smile. He was carrying a small bottle in his hand, which looked like a medicine bottle.

"What is that?"

"It's a bottle of medicine manufactured by a pharmaceutical company. This is not an over-the-counter medicine but this is a medicine used by a hospital."

"The bottle looks a bit strange."

"This is a foreign medicine, from Germany. Our company made a contract to manufacture this bottle."

"Really? Isn't it made of glass?"

"No. This is actually plastic. We already received the product drawing, and our research center's chief officer—Dr. Joon-Soo Oh will start developing this product soon."

"Really?"

"They are paying good money too. Also, once we successfully develop this product, we can export them to other countries too."

"Will there be enough demand for that product?"

"Yes. This is a single-dose vial for injection. It is used once and tossed out after each use. So, the demand for this kind of bottle is very high. Once we successfully develop this product, we can increase our monthly sales revenue by

1 billion won."

"It would be 12 billion won per year. GH Mobile started with the annual sales revenue of 70 billion won. Once we developed our new product—AM083 Assembly, we added an additional 10 billion won to it. And, if we add another 10 billion won that you, President Song brought into this company by contracting with S Group's factories, and also add this medical bottle of 10 billion won, our company's total yearly revenue will be exceeding 100 billion won."

"That's right. We will reduce our debt significantly as well. So, if we succeed in developing this product, would you give a vacation to the workers at the research center as a reward?"

"Of course. They will be compensated for their effort and successful outcome, so please tell them to focus on developing the product for now."

The machine no. 3 and no. 4 arrived at Busan Port.

"Who is going to Busan for those machines this time?"

"Last time I went there and Director Jong-Suk Park came with me to give me his professional support, but this time, I don't think that would be necessary. Director Yoon, Manager Yoo from the production team, and also our new manager at the maintenance team will take care of it."

"How is the new manager of the maintenance team doing? Is he good?"

"Yes, he is very good. Director Jong-Suk Park praised his proficiency as well. He is taking care of everything that is related to machines these days. Manager Yoo and those three American engineers are the experts in the chemicals, not machines."

"Once we bring two more machines, do you think the maintenance team's manager can handle them by himself?"

"I think we need to hire one more person. I actually think we will need two more workers, but for now, we will hire one."

"Are you thinking of hiring another manager?"

"Since we have the maintenance team's manager, we can hire someone at a lower level like a team leader."

"Sounds good."

"Also, we need three more workers to the production team. The American engineers are going back to the U.S. next month. We have two researchers—Hee-Yeol Yoo and Il-Gi who received the special training from Dyeon America in the U.S., but we need an additional three workers who can assist their work."

"Are you thinking of hiring three workers at a team lead level?"

"Not really. Just a staff level is good too. We just need people who have more than one year of work experience with a chemical company."

"Have you already talked with Mr. Adam Castler about this?"

"Yes, sir. I already discussed it with him."

"Okay, then. Hire workers as you find necessary."

"Thank you."

329 Tokyo Sonata 1 – Part 2

Gun-Ho was informed that the art gallery's interior work in his building in Sinsa Town was completed. He headed to Seoul to see it. When he arrived at the building, President Jeong-Sook Shin was already at the site. The stairs leading down to the basement were built out of wood and it looked elegant. The business sign was placed on the spot where people could easily see from the main road.

"GH Gallery..."

The business sign was artistically designed but it clearly showed the name of the gallery, which was 'GH Gallery'. President Jeong-Sook Shin took Gun-Ho to the inside of the gallery. When Gun-Ho entered the gallery, Director Kang turned on the lights.

"These are all indirect lighting. President Shin often came to the gallery during the renovation and gave us advice on the interior work."

"It looks great. It seemed the interior design company did a very good job here. I do like the lighting and the layout of the interior, but the gallery hall seems a bit small."

President Jeong-Sook Shin responded to Gun-Ho's comment with a smile,

"It's not a small space, sir, for an art gallery. This is twice larger than the Sotdae Art Gallery in Insa Town. Unless there are so many paintings to display, this is actually a good sized art gallery."

"Oh, I heard that you have sold all of Mr. Ding Feng's paintings already."

"Actually, we have two paintings left. Those two paintings are hard to sell in Korea because of the cultural differences. However, the art exhibition itself was a big success. Mr. Ding Feng was very satisfied with how his art exhibition turned out."

While Gun-Ho was having a conversation with President Jeong-Sook Shin, he received a call from Min-Hyeok Kim in China.

"President Goo? My father-in-law seems to be very happy. He is constantly bragging about his art exhibition in Korea to everyone he sees. He said that he made a bigger success in Korea than Japan or Hong Kong, with his art exhibition. He asked me to tell you that he appreciates you and President Shin's help and he is really grateful."

"Well, we made money with his art exhibition too."

"He sent two of his paintings by mail for you and President Shin as a token of his appreciation. Those are a gift from him."

"He didn't have to, but I thank him for the paintings. I will hang it on the wall in my office of the building in Sinsa Town."

Gun-Ho and President Shin followed Director Kang to the rooftop.

The rooftop was neatly cleaned, and new grass was growing there with other plants and trees. There were a small gazebo and wooden benches as well.

"Wow. The space looks totally different."

President Shin seemed to be impressed.

"Do you see the empty space over there? That's the space where we will build a small construction for business use."

President Shin seemed to be excited about the space, and said,

"Sir, I think we can run a book café there. We can connect it with the art gallery in the basement. This rooftop space looks amazing. The office workers in this building can take a break here. It can be a nice place for the old ladies from Gangnam District to meet with their friends too."

"Once I rent the spaces for the art gallery and the book café to GH Media, you will have to pay the rent on time. Are you confident that you can handle it?"

"Can we start with a low rent in the beginning? I want to give a try."

"Sure. Director Kang, make a design request to the construction company and apply for the building permit. I will send Director Yoon from Dyeon Korea here;

he is the expert in the construction field. He will be of great help. I believe, you and Director Yoon together will make a nice book café space in this rooftop."

"Okay, sir."

Gun-Ho made a phone call to Seukang Li to Shanghai.

"Mr. Ding Feng's art exhibition in Korea was a success."

"Really? Congratulations."

"Do you know the art gallery which handled the Chinese young painters' avant-garde art exhibition?"

"Of course, I do."

"I will visit Shanghai soon with President Jeong-Sook Shin. Can you introduce the gallery to us?"

"Sure. It's my job to promote Chinese artists' art exhibitions abroad. Come quick."

"Okay. I will be there next week."

"I hope that GH Media expands its business to other fields like art, music, soap opera, and movie, not just publishing books."

On Friday, Gun-Ho went to Japan. His passport became shabby with a lot of stamps from the immigration office, because of his frequent trips to Japan and China.

Once he arrived at the New Otani Hotel in Akasaka, Tokyo, he looked for the hotel manager.

"Hi. I made a reservation to use the small meeting room—Gekkyu."

"Oh, hi. You reserved it for four houses of use, right?"

"Yes, I did. I'm not sure if I'm going to have a meal or not, but even though I decide not to have a meal, I will pay the basic cost for it."

"Hai, Wakarimashita (I understood)."

Gekkyu was located on the 18th floor. It had the full view of the forest around Japan's State Guest House. Once the sun went down, the lights on the streets and the surrounding buildings were turned on one by one. Gun-Ho looked out of the window while sitting on a chair in Gekkyu. Gun-Ho looked at his watch. The appointment time he gave to Seol-Bing was 6 pm and it was already twenty minutes past six. Gun-Ho thought Seong-Bing wouldn't show up again. The hotel staff came into the room and filled up Gun-Ho's empty glass with water. Gun-Ho ordered a glass of wine, and he continued to look out of the window while having the wine. It was dark outside, and he saw Seol-Bing's reflection in the window.

'Oh, my gosh. Did I see a ghost just now? Am I that desperate to see her?'

Gun-Ho continued to drink his wine while thinking it was just an image his desperate mind created. But he then felt like someone was standing behind him.

"Oh, Seol-Bing!"

Seol-Bing came into the room quietly and she was standing behind Gun-Ho. She was still wearing her dark sunglasses and she was wearing a coat.

"I thought you wouldn't be able to make it. Thank you for coming. Please have a seat."

Seol-Bing sat on a chair. She didn't take off her sunglasses.

"Why did you want to see me?"

"Do you, by any chance, know of a Chinese production company called Huace Media?"

"Yes, I do."

"I have a company named GH Media, and I am seriously reviewing the possibility of acquiring a Chinese entertainment company."

Seol-Bing didn't say a word but she was listening to Gun-Ho quietly.

"It's not a Korean company but it is a Chinese company that I'm thinking of acquiring. If that company produces a movie, can you help us?"

"It's not something I can decide. My agency makes a decision for all of my work."

"Does your agency decide whether you can see someone or not?"

Seol-Bing smiled slightly.

"Would you like to have a glass of wine?"

"I'm good, but thank you."

Even though Seol-Bing expressed her unwillingness of having a glass of wine, Gun-Ho ordered one more glass and filled up the glass with the wine.

"That's all you wanted to ask me?"

Gun-Ho placed the glass of wine in front of Seol-Bing in response to her question. Seol-Bing didn't even lay her eyes on the glass of wine and said,

"To be honest with you, it was really hard for me to come here to meet with you. I'm supposed to make a report to my agency about every single move I make."

330 Tokyo Sonata 2 – Part 1

Gun-Ho walked towards the window while holding his glass of wine.

"You live like an Avatar of your agency company. Come to think of it, a businessman seems to have a more creative and liberal life, even though we need to take more risk."

Seol-Bing was sitting on a chair without saying a word. Gun-Ho continued to talk,

"Even a top star needs a room to breathe. A celebrity should be able to make his or her own decision on dating someone or marrying someone. Well, I guess I don't get to say anything on that subject. Even though I do make all of the decisions and choices in my life, I haven't married yet; I've been so busy to fulfill the plans and schedules I made."

Seol-Bing lifted her head slightly, and asked,

"Are you... single?"

"Yes, I am."

"I know you have several companies, but I didn't know you are still single."

Gun-Ho placed his glass of wine on the table and said,

"Do you have anyone you can introduce to me? Anyone who looks like you would be good for me."

A faint smile appeared on Seol-Bing's face. She then took her glass of wine and took a sip of it. After she put the glass of wine back to the table, she took off her dark sunglasses. Her beautiful face was revealed.

"You have a beautiful face."

"President Goo, you look younger than the last time when I saw you in Shanghai."

"I'm not that young. I'm 36 in Korean age."

It was raining outside the window after a cold wind blowing.

"Why don't you have some more wine? It's okay. There is no one here except us. You must be very tired by coming all the way here from Korea. Take a sip of the wine; it will help you with fatigue."

Seol-Big said after taking a small sip of the wine,

"Actually, I came here for an event in Tokyo Dome in Suidobashi. Some of my staff already returned to Korea after the event, and I told them that I would stay here a bit longer because I didn't feel well."

"I see. I hope I didn't take too much of the top star's time."

Silence filled the air for a while.

"Ms. Seol-Bing, You are probably contemplating your marriage these days since it's about the age to get married for you. You probably have a lot of nice people around you to choose from for your marriage, given your position as a top star."

"Not necessarily."

"Maybe I can introduce someone to you."

Seol-Bing lifted her head and looked at Gun-Ho. Her eyes were shining with excitement.

"The person I want to introduce to you is an earnest and loyal man. He knows how to be kind and generous to his woman. He also knows when to sacrifice himself, and he has a sense of serving the public with compassion. He has a very good manner as well. You can say that he is a wealthy man. He didn't inherit the wealth from his family but he is a self-made successful man. He is currently running several companies. He is from Incheon City and he is now living in Gangnam District, Seoul. He is 36 years old and his name is Gun-Ho Goo."

Seol-Bing giggled a bit and took another sip of her wine.

"Oh, that's good. Take some more wine."

Gun-Ho applauded in encouraging her to have more wine and filled up Seol-Bing's glass with more wine.

While Seol-Bing had one glass of wine, Gun-Ho had three glasses. He was not drunk but he surely felt the heat in his body.

Gun-Ho suddenly grabbed Seol-Bing's hand.

"Ms. Seol-Bing, even though you are a top star right now, you need to think of your future. Your position as a top star won't last forever. I think it's time for you to start your family. I will protect you."

Seol-Bing let Gun-Ho hold her hand.

"I'd like to continue this sort of meeting with you more frequently. I know you have a hectic schedule that was set up by your agency. I do also have my own busy schedule that I put myself in. I strongly believe we can help and comfort each other in this busy world, and we can design our future together."

Seol-Bing smiled and took her hand back from Gun-Ho's. She grabbed her glass of wine instead. It was Seol-Bing's second glass of wine that night.

The two people turned their chairs around so they could face the window, and looked out the window. It was dark outside. They could only see the lights from the street lights and stores. Seol-Bing said,

"It's raining hard, isn't it?"

"It looks like. Where is your agency located at?"

"It's in Cheongdam Town."

"It's not far from my office. My office is in Sinsa Town."

"I think I heard that you own a building in Sinsa Town."

"Who told you that?"

"I heard BM Entertainment's president and Manager Byeon talking."

"Manager Byeon? The dandy looking guy who smiles with his eyes all the

time?"

"Hahaha. That's right."

For the first time, Gun-Ho saw Seol-Bing laughing loudly.

In the building in Sinsa Town, I made an art gallery in the basement. It's called 'GH Gallery.' The interior renovation is completed and it will open soon. For the very first art exhibition there, I'm planning to exhibit the Chinese young artists' avant-garde."

"Avant-garde?"

"Yes."

"I thought you were just a businessman. I didn't know you are also into the arts."

"I want to officially invite you to the opening ceremony, Ms. Seol-Bing."

"My schedule..."

"If you can make it, please come."

Seol-Bing just smiled.

A waiter of the New Otani Hotel entered the room.

"Would you like to order for your dinner?"

Gun-Ho looked at Seol-Bing's face, and she nodded her head.

"We will have two Gekkyu set menus."

"Are you expecting anyone else joining you, sir?"

"No."

"Hai, Shibaraku Omachikudasai. (Okay. Please wait.)"

The Japanese dinner came with lots of fish dishes, such as slices of raw tuna and grilled salmon.

"I feel like we have known each other for a long time. It's like two old friends are having dinner together."

Seol-Bing just smiled in response to Gun-Ho's comment.

After the main meal, they had fruits as a dessert. When they finished the dinner, Seol-Bing said,

"Thank you for inviting me to dinner. I think I'd better go back to my hotel."

"It would have been really nice if we had more time to talk today. Why don't we meet again here later? I do like this place. It's quiet and not so busy."

When Seol-Bing stood up from her seat and grabbed her coat, Gun-Ho quickly stood up and helped her to wear her coat. He then said,

"Let's fix the date for our next meeting. What about two weeks on Sunday? Here at this place?"

"Two weeks after next Sunday is not good for me. I need to attend the award ceremony of the Japanese broadcasting station—NHK. It's on the 16th. I have been invited to it as a guest."

"Then, let's meet the day after the award ceremony."

"This place is too pricey though. This meeting room is too big for only the two of us."

"I don't know many places in Tokyo. It is true that this place is pricey to rent, but I still think it is a good place for us to meet for now. It's quiet. Let's meet here next time. Thank you for joining me today."

331 Tokyo Sonata 2 – Part 2

Once Gun-Ho came back from Japan, he headed straight to Dyeon Korea.

"Did we receive the no. 3 and no. 4 machines?"

All the machines were in place. With the huge machines from no. 1 to no. 4, the factory looked like a really large factory.

"Hey, Jong-Suk, I didn't expect to see you here."

"Oh, bro! When did you come?"

"How's the installation going? Is it done?"

"We are working on connecting the machines to the power. The work became a lot easier since we have the new maintenance team's manager. We can finish the work quickly."

"How is the new manager of the maintenance team?"

"He is good."

At that moment, Gun-Ho and Jong-Suk heard someone tapping something.

Jong-Suk quickly turned his head to the source of the noise, and shouted,

"Mr. Assistant Manager, you shouldn't beat a metal, but you have to appease it."

Gun-Ho giggled as Jong-Suk instructed the assistant manager about how to treat a metal.

"What? Appease the metal? Man, you sound like a whiz."

Gun-Ho had lunch with Jong-Suk that day. Gun-Ho asked him,

"Hey, Director Park! Where did you learn about how to treat a meal? Like not to beat the metal but appease the metal?"

"Oh, that? I heard that from Mr. Sakata Ikuzo. He said we shouldn't hit a metal with a hammer but we should appease it nicely."

"Oh, I see. He is indeed a good teacher."

"Bro, did you go someplace nice last Sunday? You look good. You look totally recharged."

"Really? That's good."

Gun-Ho felt good.

The companies he was running were all doing very well, and the meeting with Seol-Bing seemed to be successful as well. Gun-Ho felt like he could fly.

"I did have dinner with Seol-Bing, the top star. That's not all. I will meet with her again. I hope the date to come quickly."

Gun-Ho was hearing the report from Director Yoon. Director Yoon was talking about the meeting with Director Kang in Seoul.

"I've reviewed the plan of constructing a small building on the rooftop, with Director Kang. We don't need to do public works since we are building it on a building's rooftop. And we just need to assemble the prefabricated small building there. It's a simple work."

"I guess it won't take much time then?"

"Since we are opening a book café there, we expanded the existing window to the full-size window. So from the front window of the book café, we can see the rooftop garden, and we will also have the view of Sinsa Town and Apgujeong Town from the window of the back of the book café."

"You did a good job."

Gun-Ho asked for Director Dong-Chan Kim.

"Once the new machines, no. 3 and no. 4 started working, our productivity will be dramatically increased, right?"

"I think we have to do more sales work then. We are currently targeting the client companies of GH Mobile as a start. I know all of their supplier companies where they buy their raw materials. The thing is that usually, a company is reluctant to change their supplier companies unless there is a problem. Because it is critical for them to receive raw materials steadily, they prefer to deal with the same suppliers that they have been dealing with. Unless we can provide them with substantially high-quality raw materials or at a very low price, they won't change their suppliers."

"Hmm. It will take time to find more client companies then."

"That's why we need to focus on the buyer companies' new products. The S Group's factory in Changweon City uses our Dyeon Korea's raw materials in manufacturing their new products. You know the S Group's Changweon factory that President Song signed the contract with. The quantity that they are ordering from us is steadily increasing. President Song brought in another product order for the single-dose vials for injection. They decided to use Dyeon Korea's raw materials as well. Sometimes companies place their orders by looking at the supplier companies' website. So, I think we need to build our own website."

"Oh, we don't have our website yet?"

"GH Mobile has one, but Dyeon Korea doesn't."

"You can contact the GH Media for it. Talk with the team lead of their design team. I heard she used to do some design work for a website before."

"Oh, that's a good idea. I will contact them. Maybe I should ask the design team lead to come and visit us here. So we can discuss the design of our factory's website."

"You have their contact number, right?"

"I do, sir. I have President Jeong-Sook Shin's business card."

"Their design team lead's name is Min-Sook Oh. We will have to pay them for the work though."

"Of course, sir."

"Don't we need to do some advertisements in a newspaper or media in order to enhance our sales?"

"Dyeon Korea's customers are not individuals, but companies in a specific field, which are manufacturing plastic products with injection molding machines and extruders. So, an advertisement through media won't be necessary."

"Oh, I was going to tell you. Please go visit Egnopak."

"Egnopak, sir?"

"Yes. Try Egnopak. Don't meet with anyone else there, but meet with President Seung-Gak Kim. Tell him that I sent you, and give him our product brochure."

"That's all I need to say, sir? Egnopak is a competitor with GH Mobile."

"He made his promise to use Dyeon Korea's products. You don't need to know all the details, but just tell him that I sent you."

"Understood, sir."

Director Dong-Chan Kim headed to Jinwi Town in Pyeongtaek City to visit Egnopak's factory. He was carrying Dyeon Korea's product brochure with some sample products. When he arrived at the factory, he walked straight up to the president's office. When he entered the president's office after a brief knocking, the secretary quickly stood up from her seat.

"Is President Seung-Gak Kim in the office?"

"Can I have your name, sir?"

"I'm Director Dong-Chan Kim from Dyeon Korea."

"Please have a seat. I will let our president know that you are here."

The secretary went into the president's office and came out.

"Please follow me."

"Hello, Mr. President."

Director Dong-Chan Kim gave a 90-degree bow to the Egnopak's president.

"Manager Kim, oh, I mean Director Kim. Please have a seat."

Director Dong-Chan Kim's sales pitch started.

"Sir, you don't age even a bit. You look the same as the old days when we were Mulpasaneop with our previous president Se-Young Oh. Former President Se-Young Oh still talked about you, sir. He said he wanted to pay back for your help but he had to retire before he could do so."

"Haha. Did he say so? How is he doing?"

"Well, he has a small building in Suwon City. He said he feels peaceful these days."

"Time indeed flies. I still remember those days when I and President Se-Young Oh went golfing together. At that time, you, Manager Kim, oh, I mean Director Kim, used to come with us to assist. You were in your 30s at that time. Now you have some grey hairs."

Director Dong-Chan Kim was a professional salesperson. He didn't go straight into the sales business as Gun-Ho told him to do so, but instead, he started with letting the potential buyer feel nostalgia for a while. That usually worked great with old people.

332 GH Gallery 1 – Part 1

Dyeon Korea's Director Dong-Chan Kim's flattery for the Egnopak's president continued.

"I still remember your hole-in-one when we played in Taekwang Country Club in Yongin City. It still remains vivid in my memory, sir."

"Oh, you were there, too? And you remember that?"

"Of course, sir. It was my first time witnessing a hole-in-one in my entire life."

"Haha. You know what? That was actually my last hole-in-one. I've never succeeded in it since then."

"Since you are still healthy, sir, you will have your chance to do it again."

"You really think so? Haha. By the way, what made you come to see me today? The joint company with Lymondell Dyeon started producing their products already?"

"Yes, sir. We just started producing our products."

Director Kim pulled out the sample products and showed them to the Egnopak's president with the product brochure.

The Egnopak's president looked at the sample products that Director Kim brought in with a frown. He seemed uncomfortable.

"President Goo asked me to show you these product samples."

Director Kim was aware of the assault incident caused by Egnopak's president's son nearby Onyang Hot Spring Hotel. He was there when Gun-Ho and the Egnopak reached an agreement about how to settle the matter. However, Director Kim didn't bring it up to pressure the Egnopak's president in this business matter. At that time, the Egnopak's president clearly agreed to change their raw materials from BAFT products to Dyeon Korea's, which they purchased from Mandong Company.

"Did Gun-Ho Goo say anything else?"

"Nothing further, sir. He simply asked me to visit you with the sample products."

"That Gun-Ho Goo, as*hole. That kid is really smart and manipulative."

"You seem to have some old hard feelings toward him, sir."

"That son of bi*ch stole my opportunity to do a joint venture with that American company. And he uses the incident with my son in order to gain his business benefit from me."

"Haha. Is that what happened?"

"He is a meticulous young man. That kid frightens me sometimes. He is very smart."

The Egnopak's president let out a deep sigh.

"Okay. As I promised before, I will change the raw materials from BASF to Dyeon Korea's. However, we will start with a monthly order of 10 million won. As your company proves the quality of your products, we will increase the quantity of our order."

"Sir, let's increase the initial order a bit higher. I came all the way here for this. I won't look good if I go back to my company with this deal—10 million won per month."

"If it's only for you, Director Kim, I do want to start with a good quantity, but I so hate that Gun-Ho Goo."

The Egnopak's president called for his purchasing manager through the interphone.

"Mr. Purchasing Manager? Come to my office now."

After a moment, the purchasing manager came to the president's office.

Director Kim quickly stood up from his seat to greet him.

"Hello, Mr. Manager. It has been a long time."

"Oh, hi, Mr. Director."

Since Director Kim had been in the sales field for a long time, he had met the purchasing manager before.

The Egnopak's president said to the purchasing manager,

"As to the BASF's raw materials for Mandong Company, we will replace them with Dyeon Korea's raw materials. We start the change with the amount of the materials worth of 10 million won per month for now."

"Yes, sir."

"Sir, can we increase it to 20 million won per month?"

"No. I've already made my decision. 10 million won as it is."

Once he received the report about the deal with Egnopak from Director Dong-Chan Kim, Gun-Ho made a phone call to the Egnopak's president right away. Gun-Ho had never lost his control when he encountered a problem to solve. He talked in a calm voice,

"Sir, I'm calling to remind you of our previous deal that we clearly made. I just received a report from Director Kim, and that's not what we agreed on."

"I don't understand what you are talking about."

"When we previously made the agreement, you said you would purchase our products worth 500 million won to replace BASF products that go into Mandong Company. Do you remember that? The ink on our agreement hasn't even dried yet."

"So what? What are you going to do about it?"

"I had 4 stitches, and my company's plant manager had 16 stitches. It's 20 stitches in total. I can give 20 stitches to your son's face, to be fair if that's how you want to settle."

"What, what?"

"As you know, I have more competent men than the ones your son has in this field to do this sort of job."

"We already settled for the plant manager's case. I paid 10 million won for it already."

"I can give your 10 million won back to you. A settlement doesn't seem to mean anything to you anyway. You have no intention to honor the agreement at all."

"Hmm."

"I don't want to bring up the old incident and make my relationship with you uncomfortable again."

"Do what you have to do then!"

"Okay. I will do what I need to do."

Gun-Ho thought of what he would do with the Egnopak's president, and he clicked his tongue.

"He hasn't changed a thing ever after experiencing the big incident in his life. He didn't want to let his son stay behind bars, but he doesn't want to purchase products from his competitor—Dyeon Korea. I'm not sure if he would be able to handle the consequences. He has to realize that he can't have all."

The Egnopak president didn't feel comfortable after talking with Gun-Ho on the phone.

"Is he serious about hurting my son? He is running a company now, but he used to work as a factory man without having any money or family background. He crawled up the economic ladder from the bottom as he used to live like a bottom feeder. He is surely capable of doing such an awful act. I signed the settlement agreement, and he has the original copy of it. He can always make an issue out of it at any time if he wants to. That son of bi*ch makes my late-life so hard and causes a lot of stress for me."

The Egnopak's president didn't want to think that his son was the one who made all these troubles in the first place. The people who think they were superior to others didn't seem to accept the possibility that they might be at fault under any

circumstances. However, the possibility that Gun-Ho might hurt his son seemed to affect the Egnopak's president's decision.

"I guess I will have to make a truce with him for now."

The Egnopak's president made a phone call to Director Dong-Chan Kim of Dyeon Korea.

"Director Kim, our company will buy Dyeon Korea's products that are worth 10 million won per month for now, but you have to note that it is just a start. We will definitely increase the amount of our product order as you prove your product quality."

"Thank you, sir. We will surely send you high-quality products."

333 GH Gallery 1 – Part 2

Director Kim came into Gun-Ho's office and said,

"Sir, I just received a call from Egnopak's president. He assured that he would increase the quality of their order once our product is proved with good quality."

"We don't have to rush in dealing with Egnopak."

"What are you planning, sir?"

"At first, we can file a lawsuit. They breached the contract after all. Second, we can financially damage Egnopak by taking their and also Mandong Company's clients."

"I'm actually on the second plan already. The big companies like Hyundai Auto or Hyundai Mobis always get their necessary products from more than two supplier companies. They are getting the products from Egnopak and another company named InSharp Corporation. InSharp Corporation also manufactures automobile chassis as Egnopak, and they are also using BASF products. I'm currently in contact with InSharp Corporation without letting anyone else know."

"I see."

"Mandong Company buys these products to manufacture rings and supplies them to Hyundai Auto. Mandong Company also supplies these rings to Egnopak, and Egnopak uses them in manufacturing protectors. These protectors go to Hyundai Mobis. They are in a win-win relationship by helping each other."

"So, Mandong Company and Egnopak are the first vendors."

"That's right. We are the second vendor."

"Hmm."

"We have to make GH Mobile the first vendor, too, sir. Dyeon Korea is producing raw materials, so its product itself wouldn't make it the first vendor anyway. However, GH Mobile is an automobile parts manufacturing company."

We have to be the first vendor to succeed in this industry. We officially say that we are the 1.5 vendor, but we are actually the second vendor."

"Is it that hard to be the first vendor...?"

"That's why President Song kept insisting that we need to have a patented product in order to successfully register with KOSDAQ because we are not the first vendor company. The products that we applied for a patent, which were brought in by our new research chief officer, don't seem to be lucrative, but President Song still wanted them to be patented with GH Mobile's name because he thinks it will help us successfully go public."

"Well, GH Mobile will be registered with KOSDAQ sooner or later as President Song is working so hard to achieve it. The third thing that we could do about Egnopak is using his son."

"You want to beat him up? No, sir. I can't agree with that. It's so childish and shallow approach to resolve a problem."

"Haha. Don't worry. I'm not suggesting that we need to beat him up because we don't have to. Egnopak's president's son is a troublemaker. Given his propensity, he will make another trouble someday. He has been raised by Egnopak's president without proper discipline. It is very possible that he will cause trouble soon."

"I agree with you, sir."

"When that happens, we just aggravate the situation."

"Understood, sir. We can reveal the true faces of those two men by publishing the settlement agreement with us, which he refused to honor, for example."

Director Kim and Gun-Ho laughed while looking at each other.

Gun-Ho and President Jeong-Sook Shin of GH Media arrived in Shanghai. They came to Shanghai to meet with an art gallery's director there.

"Have you contacted Director Seukang Li about the meeting?"

"Yes, sir. He said he would be waiting for us in the art gallery director's office."

"Did you say the gallery director is a lady?"

"Yes, sir. She used to be an art professor in college. The recent modern art exhibition was handled by this gallery director."

"Director Seukang Li did a great job by promoting that modern art exhibition overseas."

"Well, I think so."

Gun-Ho and President Shin arrived at the art gallery building. It was a red brick building. They walked up to the third floor where the gallery director's office was situated. The office had a high ceiling and that made Gun-Ho feel like he was in a government building in Korea. The gallery staff showed them to the director's office. Seukang Li was there already, and he was having a cup of tea with the gallery director at a round table.

"Hey! Gun-Ho Goo!"

Seukang Li and the art gallery director stood up from their seats when they saw Gun-Ho and President Shin entering the office.

"Gun-Ho, this is the gallery director."

"Nice to meet you. I'm Gun-Ho Goo."

"A pleasure to meet you. I'm Jeong-Sook Shin."

"I've heard a lot about you from Director Seukang Li. He said you are very interested in arts and cultures. I'm the director of this art gallery. My name is Deng Jufen."

Deng Jufen was a lady who was in her 50s. She was a very friendly lady.

"China's avant-garde is currently drawing a lot of attention from art lovers worldwide. I am so delighted that Korea shows their interest in it as well."

President Jeong-Sook Shin responded,

"When I first saw the paintings of Zhang Xiaogang and Zeng Fanzhi, I was so

shocked. I do highly recognize their liberty in their arts and their experimental spirits."

Deng Jufen and President Jeong-Sook Shin seemed to hit it off right away.

While the two ladies were having fun conversing about arts, Gun-Ho felt bored. He couldn't even understand what they were talking about.

Gun-Ho said to the art gallery director,

"Ma'am, we are opening a new gallery in Korea. It's called GH Gallery. For our first art exhibition, we'd like to invite Chinese contemporary young artists' paintings."

"The art exhibition for young artists started in Shanghai. We did one in Beijing already, and the one in Wuhan is ongoing. It will end by the end of this week, so we can send their paintings to another location starting next week. I can add additional paintings that were not displayed this time if you want."

"Do they all come with their frames?"

"Of course. Chinese avant-garde art exhibition has been held in many other countries so far. We have a transportation company that has been handling the transportation of those paintings. You can use the same service."

"I see."

"Packaging companies have their own system to make transportation safe and easy. They usually use a metal frame that looks like a bookshelf, so they can place framed paintings in it efficiently. They then place the metal frame in a special container for transportation by air. Each airline such as Korean Air or Asiana Air has its own special container where they can maintain a certain temperature and humidity."

"I see."

"The paintings we will send to you for the art exhibition in Korea are not from well-known artists such as Zhang Xiaogang or Zeng Fanzhi, but they will be the paintings of the promising young painters in China. Their paintings are still worth more than 100,000 dollars per piece. Five artists will participate in the art

exhibition in Korea, and we will send to you thirty paintings in total."

Gun-Ho started doing his math in his head.

'Did she just say 100,000 dollars per painting? Wow! She is sending thirty of them to us, and they are worth 3 billion dollars then? Wow. Unbelievable. They surely have to use a special transportation company who knows how to handle those expensive paintings. The transportation insurance probably costs a lot too.'

Gun-Ho said while swallowing his saliva,

"If those young painters' paintings value more than 100,000 dollars per piece, then the paintings of Zhang Xiaogang or Zeng Fanzhi must be worth more than 1 million dollars."

The art gallery director responded while smiling.

"The paintings of the great artists such as Zhang Xiaogang or Zeng Fanzhi are selling for more than 10 million dollars at the auction in Hong Kong or London."

"Wow. Did you say 10 million dollars?"

Dyeon Korea's paid-in capital was 10 million dollars. A single painting from those great artists was worth the same amount. Gun-Ho couldn't close his mouth in shock.

'Maybe I should get into this field. Maybe this is a gold mine.'

Gun-Ho swallowed his saliva again as he saw the new opportunity to make more money.